

SOME LETTERS
OF AN
AMERICAN WOMAN
CONCERNING LOVE
AND OTHER THINGS

Sophie Webster



Class PS 3

Book 1

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GENEVIEVE.

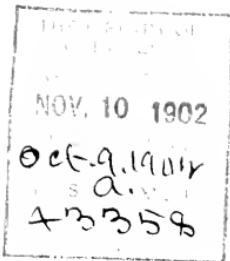
SOME LETTERS
OF AN
AMERICAN WOMAN
CONCERNING
LOVE AND OTHER THINGS

BY

SARAH BIDDLE

DRAWINGS BY ANNETTA GIBSON MCCALL

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BY

SARAH BIDDLE.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Letter I.	11
Letter II.	15
Letter III.	21
Letter IV.	26
Letter V.	31
Letter VI.	35
Letter VII.	38
Letter VIII.	42
Letter IX.	48
Letter X.	54
Letter XI.	58
Letter XII.	62
Letter XIII.	66
Letter XIV.	71
Letter XV.	76
Letter XVI.	81
Letter XVII.	86
Letter XVIII.	90
Letter XIX.	96
Letter XX.	101
Letter XXI.	107
Letter XXII.	113
Letter XXIII.	120
Letter XXIV.	126
Letter XXV.	132
Letter XXVI.	137
Letter XXVII.	144
Letter XXVIII.	150
Letter XXIX.	156
Letter XXX.	162
Letter XXXI.	167
Letter XXXII.	172
Letter XXXIII.	178
Letter XXXIV.	185
Letter XXXV.	192

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	OPPOSITE PAGE
Genevieve	4
Lily	34
Mr. Wood	44
Sir Lionel Bedford	52
Westminster Abbey, North Porch	71
The Tower	77
Windsor Castle, from Thames	81
Stoke-Poges Church	85
The High Street	88
The Isis and Barges	88
View from Magdalen Tower	88
Exeter College and Sheldonian Theatre	93
Magdalen College and Bridge	93
Christ Church—West front	93
Stratford-on-Avon. View from Memorial Gardens	97
Warwick Castle, from the Bridge	103
Paris, Les Tuileries et La Rue de Rivoli	122
Notre Dame, Paris	134
Versailles—Vue Générale Du Château	141
Abbaye de St. Denis, XII., Siècle	157

SOME LETTERS
OF
An American Woman
CONCERNING
Love and Other Things.

LETTER I.

Can it be, dear, that you are really off, and that months, even years, are to roll by before we see each other again? This is the fate of a seafaring man's wife—I knew it when I married you one year ago, and meant to be so brave, and now, when the moment comes, all my vaunted courage gives way, and I am not one bit the brave wife of a courageous commander, but a weak woman, broken-hearted because her husband and lover must leave her to do his duty to his country. It fairly makes one hate one's country. What right has it to sever those who love each other? Horrible dreads fill me. I wonder if I can live the three years through, or if fate, or whatever it is that ordains our destinies, will ever bring us together again.

I know this is foolish and the result of over-wrought nerves.

Dear, you have been everything to me ; you can scarcely know what this year's life with you has done for me. From you I have learned much. My mind, through intercourse with such as yours, has enlarged. I can never be too thankful for the happy hours with you. Can you imagine, beloved, what it means to one like me, brought up quietly, conservatively, always repressing my real self, to come across such a spirit and mind as yours? To feel that I could give myself out wholly, unreservedly, feeling sure nothing I said, nothing I did, was misunderstood by you. I have felt like a flower kept in the shade, and taught to keep its petals closed, suddenly picked by a strong hand and put in the sun, and told to unfold its petals to the full, and drink in the glorious sunshine of Heaven. How delightful the warmth that steals to the very heart, the sense of ease and comfort that reaches to the very finger tips! Thank Heaven, you say that I have been so much to you. "Everything a woman could be." Those dear words of yours ring in my ears and keep me buoyed up ; also your promise, if danger of war is over, and there is any chance of your being stationed at some port for a length of time,

you will send for me. I have read these words and engraven them on my heart, "For without you, my dear, loving wife and companion, everything seen is under a cloud and the days are very long and dreary."

Your splendid belief that a woman has an individuality, irrespective of her lord and master (how I hate that term), to be developed, used, accounted for just as much as his, only with this difference, that she must always wish to be feminine in whatever she does, knowing, realizing, that she, as a woman, has many powers, both mental and physical. Let her develop them to their full, and she can, indeed, be a fine creature, a perfect woman; and what could be finer than that? Certainly no poor deluded creature man, who imagines blindly that he holds the reins. I am sure you do not, dear, for I have you, have you in my heart, where you must stay forever. Ah, my husband, how I love you. There is nothing in all the world like a perfect union between man and woman. It is such that even death cannot break it.

Yesterday, as I watched your ship steam slowly out of port, but oh so surely, I felt as if every turn of the wheel tore my heart, but then the sweet certainty of your great love, and faith in me and mine in you, a bond that even

separation could not break, and the fond hope at last came over me that perhaps you would see me in your dreams. Fate could not keep apart two hearts so closely bound and the strong magnetism that draws us together will be sure to so arrange matters that you will be sending for me to cross the water to meet you. I will write every day and with all the love that is in me. I am and always will be yours.

LETTER II.

Just think, dear, two days since your departure. I have really lived through them. How strange! We live, eat, talk, when our hearts are torn. Such is our mechanism. The works grind on till the appointed time of stopping. Thank God, for me there is yet hope. You are still living and all the minutes, hours, days and months till our next meeting are as nothing, a watch passed in the night. It must be endured before the great and glorious dawn; the hour when we are to meet again. Thank you, thank you, for your letter sent me through the pilot. "I know that you are brave and will do all you can to courageously stand the days that must be passed before we can meet again. That you will keep me ever in your thoughts, ever holding as a beacon light before you the hour when I can clasp you to my heart again."

Thank God, you feel as I do. Knowing this, nothing can daunt me. For your sake I will make as much of myself as I can. The days shall not be spent in idle mourning, for on your return you must find a woman broadened, deep-

ened, better able to give all that she would of herself to you, asking and knowing that she will receive the same from you. I love you, miss you; you know the full meaning of it. There is nothing that you could ask I would not give you fully, wholly, unreservedly, as I want to give. To give myself I must be myself, give rein to my own originality, develop myself and all the powers that are within me. How I despise the woman who says, "I think so because my husband does, I act so because my husband does," and so on *ad infinitum*. I know you dislike her, too, otherwise you would never have chosen me. I can never be a man's slave. I want to be his companion, his love, everything, knowing that he respects the individual in me and would hold me as nothing if I did not develop this. I in return demanding from him the man, the strength, the support, the encouragement his stronger development ought to give, willingly acknowledging his superiority, knowing without him I could not develop to the full measure of my being.

There, dear, what do you think of my ideas regarding the attitude of man to woman? Perhaps you will laugh at my heroics, but oh how I wish I could hear the ring of that laugh in my

ear. Remember I will not give up and you shall find me all the better for the struggle with my longing for you whilst we are separated by cruel fate. Why cannot science find some means of eliminating space? I suppose she will some day when you and I are long since passed the boundary from which no traveler returns. How I wish we could go hand and hand together, then I should have no childish dread of the dark. Perhaps on the other side we will laugh at our baby fears, all things having become clear as day in the grand sunlight.

Do you know, chéri, I fear I am not very religious, leaving all things to unfold themselves in due season. The Puritanical teaching of my early days could never find ground to flourish in my poor heretical heart. Everything was so repressing. I love to expand. How fortunate that you appeared on the scene and taught me how to give up to the very joy of living, with the free determination to use every power given me. You hold the reins and know when to give a gentle pull on the curb and I answer to your slightest touch, knowing in your hands the race is safe and we are sure both to reach the goal. Alone I never could. The mere fact you live, breathe and care for me makes me exert every fibre of my

being to do my best. As long as you live and want me I must live. Harry, what do you suppose happened last evening? I went to church with cousin Mary. Now you know how I dislike going with her, she is so full of gloom and the direful consequences in the next world of any misstep in this. She came in and said that all our trials were sent to us so as not to let us think too much of this world, and that when we had set our hearts on any thing that was the thing we must be willing to sacrifice. That I thought too much of you and if I went on in this way something would surely happen to you. As for her she could not imagine caring for any man as I did for you. Poor thing, she has never been married; history says has never had an offer; half her life denied her; but she had a very uncomfortable effect on me and creeps seemed to go up and down my back at the awful fear of some terrible calamity befalling you as retribution to me.

I hastened to don my hat and go. Such a lugubrious sermon, as we had. We were told we must think nothing of the things of this world at all, and were to welcome afflictions as great joys, inasmuch as they were meant to strengthen our characters. But cannot joy help us? Surely it is not necessary to walk through

a vale of woe to reach the promised land. I do so want to be happy, happy, happy ; have you near me and bask in the sunshine of your love. I know I am better for it, and come what will, nothing can take from me the joy of the few months' intercourse with you. I was very much depressed, and would scarcely speak to cousin Mary at all. I know I was very disagreeable, but I just could not help it. I did not ask her to stay ; I could not, and, fortunately, just then the waitress announced Miss Lily Crosby. My heart leaped with joy, for you know how fond I am of her, and I was quite sure that cousin Mary could not remain talking with such frivolous creatures. Sure enough, ten minutes after Lily's arrival she took her departure. Dear Lily was simply perfect ; a balm to my poor distracted heart. She was very sweet and sympathetic, and said if she were your wife she would feel exactly as I do, but that it would never do to mourn alone too much.

“ You do not want to lose your beauty, dear, do you, before Harry comes back ? If you keep yourself shut up here crying your eyes out, and going to church with cousin Mary, you will be a sight ! ”

Her laugh was contagious ; and what do you think, Harry, she has made me promise to do ?

Go with her to-morrow to Atlantic City for a few weeks, and then, you will scarcely guess, cross the ocean for a few months' trip with her, I acting as chaperon. Dear, I had always hoped first to cross with you, but I cannot help being delighted to go, for I know first and foremost, it will help make the time pass between now and our next most longed-for meeting. Besides, what do you suppose Lily's idea is? We are to study all the pictures we can in London and Paris, and when we return, get a studio and paint whatever and whoever we can next winter. We are to make a business of it, otherwise, she says, it will be no fun; and it is so entertaining to paint any delightful stranger that comes along. She tells me you would think this splendid. So, dear, I have consented. To-morrow we start for Atlantic City for two weeks, first buying our tickets on the *Patricia*, sailing two weeks from next Wednesday. But whatever Lily is and wherever I am, you are always the first, and all my efforts are for you.

I am always and ever yours.

LETTER III.

DEAR HEART :

Lily and I came down to Atlantic City yesterday and here we are at the Brighton for two weeks prior to sailing. I must tell you of a curious incident. After dinner we walked to the end of the pier to watch the sea with the moon shining brightly on the waves as one after another rolled in, in unending succession, the rhythm of the undulating, unerring movement making us both very sleepy and me very sad and lonely thinking, thinking of you and wondering if you were watching the waves and dreaming of me as I of you. I think I must have fallen asleep. Suddenly I seemed to awaken to the fact that you were beside me; surely you were there, holding me tight, your kiss was upon my brow, and a feeling as if an understanding as never before existed between us. A sense of utter comfort crept over me, you were there. I felt your arms about me, my head was upon your shoulder and your breath upon my brow. Surely one could live thus satisfied forever. Then a desire to speak, to hear your voice, came upon me. For a sec-

ond I hesitated, a knowledge seemed to come over me that if I spoke you would glide away from me in the moonlight far, far away upon the waves, but foolish, as all human beings are, not content with what they have, I made an effort to speak. I struggled, but my words of undying love would not come. Try as I would I could not speak, but you held me tighter, tighter; our eyes met in one long look of eternal love. At last, and woe to me, my voice came and as I spoke you began to disappear and to float out over the waves. I uttered a cry, full of misery, then I felt a hand on my arm and Lily exclaiming, "Genevieve, wake up!" With a start I was upon my feet, but my dream—or was it a dream?—had faded away and you were nowhere to be seen. I could not tell my experience to Lily, I felt it too deeply and only urged her to return to the house; I could not watch those waves any more.

We soon reached the hotel, and going immediately to my room and flinging myself on my bed I sobbed myself to sleep in the utter weariness of a lonely woman, crying her heart out for him who was far away on the great deep. What were you doing? What were you thinking? Only for one word, one crumb of comfort; but not a sound upon the dead still-

ness of the night, and then all became a blank. I had wafted out upon the waters of sleep.

As I awoke this morning the bright light came streaming into my windows, bringing quiet and peace to my soul with its beams. I have promised Lily for your sake and hers, for who could be sweeter, lovelier and braver than she, always loyal and faithful and the best of friends, to be as brave as possible, and to start this very day with her to paint. You know we both took a few lessons several winters ago and were told that we had decided talent, but this remains to be seen, and what the public may think of our efforts.

We have taken two good-sized studios in New York, and intend furnishing them very prettily and attractively, meaning, at least, to be successful in offering good cups of afternoon tea to our friends, and then, if they wish to buy our landscapes and have their portraits painted, so much the better.

I know you will not mind my doing this, dear. Of course you give me everything I want, and I need nothing so far as money is concerned, but somehow it will be fun to try to do what I can and to have a few pennies in my pocket actually made by myself. This I will give to poor sailors. At any rate all artists

have a right to what their talent may bring. Can I possibly ever claim to be among their ranks? Just think, you may one day be the husband of a noted woman! Don't be frightened; I shall never be very terrible, and shall always reach up to my splendid, commanding husband. There, dear, am I flattering you too much?

Well, beloved, I am off now to try my hand at a beautiful little quiet spot on the beach, hidden a little from the glare of Atlantic City, Brigantine Beach in the distance and the waves breaking upon the bar. Somehow the lights on the waves glitter and sparkle and all seems full of joy, and you, dear, seem nearer, and a feeling of certainty comes over me that we will surely meet again and not far distant. Strange how the sun and dancing waves waft away many of the woes that fill our hearts.

Do not be worried over our trip, mein herzchen. I know we can take good care of ourselves. Lily speaks such good French and German; she has been abroad before. She is so full of excitement over our trip and all the adventures she knows we are to have. If it were not for being separated from you, dear, I should be full of delight, too; but I do not intend to mar her pleasure with a long face but will try to

enjoy it all myself, and in this way make time pass until we meet again.

Write me, love, if you had any feeling that you were with me the night I dreamed we met. Is there anything in mental telepathy?

Dearest as ever and always,

Yours.

LETTER IV.

DEAREST :

Another day has gone, and such a beautiful one, too. The air as clear as ether, the sun brilliant but tempered by a soft, gentle breeze, one must let one's worries go and enjoy the heaven-born day.

Lily and I had a late breakfast and sauntered out to finish our landscape, which we are both much pleased with, feeling sure we have made a beginning and must rise to the heights of true artists. Do not laugh when you read this, but I know you will approve of our attempts at any rate.

An old artist wandering around lit upon us and walked up to give us a view point. An old Scotchman, full of himself, who paints fairly well, and has some charming little English and American scenes for sale. The only trouble with him is that he thinks no one knows anything but himself, and he uprooted all our cherished hopes, coldly running down all that we considered our best points but still he thought with a little practice we might do better and our trip to Europe where we could

study real art would be of inestimable value to us. He was something of a damper to our ardent spirits and at last, with evident hints, we managed to get rid of him. But you know how hard it is to get anything into a Scotchman's head !

After painting for an hour or so we decided to go to the pier and watch the wonderful crowds. Such a mixture ! Well dressed women sitting alongside of somebody's cook. Each enjoying the same shows. Is there anywhere over the globe such a place as Atlantic City ? Surely, nowhere. It is a kingdom of itself, a sight no traveler can miss who considers himself anything of a globe trotter, and wishes to hold that reputation.

We were enjoying our study of human nature thrown helter-skelter together, when suddenly a voice announced, "Adgie and her lions ; the most wondful show of this or any age." Surely, we must see this and we follow, rush, wedge in between this fat woman and that lean man, a sticky, molasses-faced child and madame from New York with all her latest frills. We find ourselves seated just below the cage enclosing the three fierce, splendid looking lions ; one lion (a Morman with two wives), such magnificent creatures ; willowy, lithe,

sinewy. Expectant, flushed Adgie appears. The lions prick up their ears, and as the music sounds, become uneasy and excited, walk quickly from side to side, at first slowly then more quickly, for somehow the rush of the crowd and the clash of the music portends some awful catastrophe. What is this? Adgie in all her glory; red satin petticoat, black lace flounce, bolero jacket and gold buttons, black and streaming hair with red roses, humming her troubadour song.

The cage is opened, one scarcely breathes as the animals, all alert, watch for their prey. Bang goes the gate, and she is caged with those splendid creatures all alone. Surely, they will answer to her magnificent nerve; something in her very atmosphere compels them to obey.

Giving a dumb look of adoration, round and round they go obeying every flash of her eye, over hurdles, through rings, crouching in corners, springing over her outstretched leg. Never was there to their eyes such a woman. She catches her foot, for one moment is down and they now think to revolt. An angry growl, a roar, the heart of the audience scarcely beats. Could one live and see her torn to pieces before one's eyes? But, no; she is up,

smiling, holding her rod before their eyes with a steady hand. They know their mistress and decide to give in.

Who knows when that day will come when she will miss her step and spring up too late? The beasts of the forest know their power. Suddenly, perhaps a scratch, and their passion for blood be up. Heaven help her in that hour. Fortunately for us the show ended peacefully. We left the amphitheatre with beating hearts, rejoicing that we had escaped the horror of seeing her torn to bits.

Each day I wonder, wonder where you are, how far off, and if often our thoughts do not meet together, unable to resist the great attraction that lies between us, a force so powerful that distance, no matter how great, cannot overcome it.

Last evening we met a very attractive young woman with her husband; so happy, so delighted, in the companionship of each other. It fairly made me ill, a jealous rage seemed to fill my soul, and I almost hated them for their joy. Ah, dear, was there ever such love as ours? The same vows, the same words have passed between so many and each one proudly believes in his egotism of love that his is the greatest love of all. Fond and happy delusion, but true for

each individual. For them the whole world is composed of naught but the loved one.

We are meeting some pleasant people, who serve to pass the time, and among them a very nice young New Yorker, who seems quite interested in our trip, and I feel sure is becoming decidedly *épris* with Lily. The latter says I must not be too prim but enter into the "fun," as she calls it, and enjoy being a grass widow. Did you ever hear anything like her? I have promised not to spoil the sport at any rate, and be a most sensible chaperon who sees very little. But, dear heart, never for one moment shall this heart of mine stop beating, beating for you, until the last great throb, and even then it shall be a long unending hush for you—always—always

LETTER V.

DEAREST :

I take up my pen again to write all that is in my heart to you, but that can be told in a few words, "I love you." Oh, how I miss you; but still, dear, I intend to keep up and try to be as bright as possible. I must remember how many there are who have not what I have. Just having read "Sir Richard Calmady," makes one feel thankful that such awful calamities have not befallen one, but then how few have such a dreadful path to walk. It seems almost an outrage to write such horrors; what good can come of it? What moral can the writer wish to point that could not be gained by a healthier, truer book? The intense sensuous descriptions of abnormal conditions make one almost sick and wonder how anyone, especially a woman, could write such things. The more abnormal the situation the more deeply the author cuts into it with her knife and dissects it for us. A feeling of revolt seizes one; why should she conjure up such horrors? A truly racy, healthy book, though against the code of general morals, leaves one

in a far more normal condition, for at least it does not sin against nature. This monstrous growth of a morbid mind cannot fail to leave a very unwholesome impression upon one, to make one feel the sooner such a book is consigned to oblivion the better. One thing one can say for it, it holds one's attention to the end, and one cannot help admiring the magnificent superhuman character of the mother and pitying intensely the son, feeling he should be forgiven anything, and wondering how he overcame himself so finely.

Such a sail as Lily, Mr. Wood and I had to-day ; it fairly made one intoxicated with the pleasure of drinking in the ozone of the air. To be alive seemed good ; the only drawback to me was your absence. I wonder, dear, if it is good to tell you all this—after all you ought to be very thankful the heart of a woman in this great world beats for you so truly, so steadily as this of mine. Do you appreciate it? I think, love, you do from all you say and write, but just think how long I must wait for my answer. You have promised to write each day, and at the first opportunity, send the whole book as you call it, to me. I know this, dear, no book could be read with more avidity than yours will be by me. How selfish and egotistical

love is ; nothing is of any importance to me except you, and here I am just living and waiting, working and breathing for you. The sea breezes have blown away much of my fear that something would happen to you and I feel a certainty come over me that before the year is out we will meet again.

Mr. Wood says he intends joining our party and sails with us next Wednesday week in the Patricia. We sail in her for Plymouth. She is a slow boat but we want the voyage and I shall feel that we are on the water together. That will be something, anyway. I am very much excited about the trip, for how could I help it? This is my first, and to see foreign shores seems almost too good. I will write you my impressions, feelings, etc., and you must tell me what you think of them. You have been so often and know so much and how I had hoped first to step on foreign soil with you, but that is not to be, and I must take what is given me. I hope I shall not be ill, but somehow I think I am so interested and delighted to step on board one of those ocean greyhounds that I simply could not be.

Mr. Wood seems so infatuated with Lily I think I will have to pretend to be blind, sometimes, at any rate. It will be so pleasant to have Mr.

Wood, for without a man in Europe, I hear a woman is pretty well out of place. You can be sure that Lily and I want to see everything. I being a chaperon, can be allowed everywhere. Are you frightened? Well, at any rate, I promise to tell you all, so this will make you, or ought to, feel better. Perhaps you are wondering about our painting. Really, I am so pleased with our attempts, I almost think we have made artists of ourselves already. At any rate, we are as pleased as children over the result of our efforts, and surely we have put on canvas something of the beauty of the morning and sea and beach. Lily's almost wafted a sea breeze, and I could smell the salt air.

Dear Heart, forgive me for all my nonsense, but remember the saddest moments and the deepest longings of one's heart are often concealed in this way. And is it not best? Always—always Love—

Yours.



L.H.V.

LETTER VI.

DEAR HEART:

Our visit here has come to an end, and to-morrow we start for New York and sail the day after. I really am very much excited to think we shall be off in two days. It will bring me nearer to you. I shall think, dream of you on the waters, feeling a happiness in the knowledge that you are on the great deep, too. Dear, we shall have to try and forget that you are on the Pacific and not the Atlantic!

I hope you will not think me dreadful for enjoying myself so much whilst you are away, but, sweetheart, I cannot help feeling my heart beat quite rapidly at the thought of all the new wonders I am to see, or, I should say, old wonders, so old some of them that one can scarcely breathe at the thought. Lily says that I am going to be thrilled through and through, and dares to predict that I will almost forget you entirely. This you know, dear, can never, never be; you are too much mine; the cord that binds us is too strong to break.

I have a funny theory to-night, mon mari; if ever you should tire of the binding I should

wish to set you loose, to loose the cord and let you free to go where'er you wished; no love that is bound unwillingly is worth the having. But, dear, with you I have no fear that the desire will ever come.

What strange creatures you men are—bind you and you wish to go, let you loose and you wish to be held. How well if more women learned this creed, and by so doing held their husbands lovers to the end.

How I should hate a cold, practical husband who was no lover at all. Dear, I know this awful, shameful truth. If ever you became such an one your bird would break her chains forever, leave the cage, defying you to bring her back. Dreadful this seems, does it not? But as I love you, I have no fear of this and all my trust in you is great, and into your keeping have I given it, believing the gift will never be returned. Really, I know I could be an awful woman if deceived, reckless, daring; revenge would take hold of me and woe to the poor man. But then, I do so hate a woman without spirit, don't you?

To-morrow we shall be on the great deep. How I long to hear the tranquilizing wish-wash of the waves against the great steamer; and also I feel a great desire to witness a storm at

sea. I almost pray for this, but Lily says I am tempting Providence, and that she will back out at the last moment if I keep on with my evil supplications, as she knows if I am answered she will have to remain in the lower regions and this she does not look forward to. How strange this world is; topsy-turvy, one man's meat another man's poison.

Mr. Wood has been attending to all the last matters, tickets, chairs, rugs, etc., and he really is a nice young man and a very necessary adjunct to the party. He shows decided liking for Lily, and there's no telling what may happen before our trip is over.

We take a look at our new studio to-morrow before leaving New York, and I intend picking up as many pretty things as possible on the other side of the water to give our rooms as foreign a look as possible. Even if our pictures are failures, certainly our rooms must not be. At least, the artistic sense of the fitness of things must be carried out here.

Always, and always until time ceases to be, and even after that

Yours.

LETTER VII.

DEAREST :

We are off upon the briny deep, and there is no going back. Whatever the experiences we are to taste, whatever may be ahead of us we must now face.

What strange delight fills one's soul at the thought of the unknown ahead, a mixture of fear and pleasure and keen delight. The looking forward, the hope of adventure, all make up the joy of living. This is the joy of youth, eternal hope, dreams of happiness that is to come. The greatest sorrow of old age is the lack of looking forward, the certainty, cold certainty, of things as they are. To this we must all come, but let us hope that during the in between, the time 'twixt youth and age, we may write down in the book of life a story, full interesting to read, to fill our last hours with hope that in the shadowy country beyond this we may continue to write a sequel far fuller, far grander than this first volume, in that we have learned the meaning and secret of life and death and all things. But to this end we must be working, not dreaming, no fate so dire as that

of the dreamer who wakes up at the last moment and finds his life gone and nothing accomplished—no volume written.

Well, dear, now for what I hope to write, and believe me I intend to try and make it interesting; you as my hero how can it help being? In writing yours do not forget to write me down your heroine. You see I demand what I give—I must, this is the selfishness of me; I cannot help it. But what love is worth anything that does not demand all and the very highest?

The air is delicious to-day, the sun warm and life-giving, and I fairly revel lying out in my chair, drinking in the ozone and allowing the breeze to play as it will with my hair, full of what I am to see and do and how I will write it all to you. I could not enjoy it half so much were it not all to be written for you.

Confessions are good for the soul, and when one has such a one as you to pour everything out to, well, then life may perfect be. But one must be very sure to choose the right confessor.

Lily and I have a nice outside stateroom and as we awoke this morning, feeling the motion of the boat, knowing we were off, a delicious delight seized us and we laughed with joy, just as children in pleasure at new experiences. The German band started that most dismal of

dirges announcing breakfast. What it is called I do not know nor care to, it is horrible. Why they wish to engender a deep nostalgia for home and the loved one, far, far away, one does not know and it simply seems fiendish. This rudely interfered with my pleasurable feelings on awaking, and finding myself off for new shores and experiences and thinking it would help me much to bear the sorrow of being separated from you. Lily said it made her feel as if some awful thing was going to happen and that our last hour had come, the boat go down or something equally terrible. I asked her please to stop. Fortunately she and the music both did and we hurried out on deck to find Mr. Wood awaiting us smilingly, but exclaiming, "D—— that music!"

Excuse that, but, dear, it is the way we felt, too! Off to breakfast we went, everyone was there, no one in this charming weather could be possibly upset and stay below. And now, here we are, novels in hand, on deck, well and comfortably seated in our chairs and I am trying like a dutiful chaperon not to overhear Lily and Mr. Wood. They do have such misunderstandings, but then they seem to enjoy the delightful "make ups" decidedly, they give a long time to them and sometimes the poor

chaperon gets a little weary. Such is life, full of many weary moments and we must not forget that we have helped to give some other poor chaperon many a tiresome moment.

The breeze is blowing deliciously, and one cannot help feeling life is worth living and wish to join in the song of all nature which seems to come from the four corners of the earth and to roll in one long drawn-out chord to the skies, "God's in His heaven, all's well with the earth."

In this spirit dear I say *au revoir* to you and feel that time will grow wings to help me over the road between now and our meeting. I look for a long, long letter in London, a budget. What joy the thought of it.

Yours always and ever,

LETTER VIII.

DEAREST :

Such beautiful weather as we have had, but I fear it may be "the calm before the storm." How often this is the case both in physical and human nature. Too long a spell of good temper is sure to end in a spell of bad. This I know from experience! To-day the sky is perfect, not a cloud to be seen save a few fleecy ones, scudding here and there as if there was no responsibility under the sun, pitying us poor mortals for worrying so over our lives when nothing really matters after all. There, this is the effect it has upon me to-day, perhaps a bad one, but then my mood may change by to-night as the clouds in the sky.

We are enjoying our trip across the ocean, the lazy days none too long, to lie out in our chairs, each breath we draw adding new life and hope to our hearts. You, dear, seem nearer, yet nearer, and each day one less till our meeting. It is sure to come soon. I know it, I feel it.

We have made some very pleasant friends on board, among them a Sir Lionel Bedford of

England. He proves a very entertaining and pleasant fellow passenger. Lily's and my enthusiasm over our trip seems to interest and amuse him. He promises to help us enjoy ourselves in London and guide us to some interesting spots. He wants us to come to his sister's country home for a day or two. It is probable we will, for nothing would delight us more than to witness some English country life. Perhaps his sister will turn her high bred little—or shall I say big—nose up at the idea of entertaining some American plebeians!

There are several good singers on board, and in the evening we enjoy charming concerts; sometimes play that game that seems to hold undying, though insipid interest—sniff. At any rate it helps to pass the time. Every day I think of and long for you. No matter how bright we all are, my heart is ever thinking of you. Sometimes I get a little dreamy, wishing for you and knowing you could add so much to the brightness of the party. They are none of them half as clever as you, and it does annoy me to have them tease me about my fits of distraction. Asking me where my thoughts are, where I have flown, and please to come back and help them through the tedium of everyday life. I have to respond and hold my

own, and tell them they are too densely stupid to understand what it is to really care for and love another creature better than oneself. Sir Lionel looked very serious when I said this, and a deep sigh escaped him, as he answered: "One could not always judge by appearances." I wonder what his story is? I must find out. My feminine curiosity is aroused, as well as a deep sympathy for any fellow-sufferer. Perhaps it would do him good to talk to me. He is very kind and indefatigable in doing all he can for us.

Lily and Mr. Wood are continually conversing. She, as you know, is full of wit and humor, and he has to keep his brains sharpened not to let her get ahead of him. I am beginning to think there may be something between them. Certainly there are signs, and they both go up and down in their tempers towards each other. When Lily has offended Mr. Wood beyond all hope, he comes to me, and I have to listen by the hour to his woes. But he is a dear fellow, and I must sympathize and tell him how to manage that most delightful but unmanageable person—Lily.

Mr. Wood, in one of his deep despairs the other morning, came to me and, during his confession, let fall the remark that he did not



MR. WOOD.



see how any man ever managed to understand or control his wife.

I answered, being a woman, that no man ever did, and he had better drop that ambition immediately, as it was sure to be nipped in the bud. Fortunately, he laughed, and soon appeared quite himself again. Lily appeared at that moment from below with cushions, rugs, books, etc., with a most sweet and engaging and helpless smile. The little wretch, she wanted to be helped. Certainly, she got what she wanted. Mr. Wood was on his feet in a minute, found Lily's chair, picking up this, that and the other thing which, of course, all dropped.

But, after much time, for it seemed to me unnecessary, Lily was seated and tucked in most comfortably, and I took up my book, but kept one eye open on them, my interest being much awakened. I could only hear a word or two now and then, but certainly matters were going smoothly and quite rapidly. I would catch, now and again, such words :

“Dearest, you cannot keep me waiting much longer!” Answer: “Perhaps, who knows, if you keep up like this, being so very nice and helpful, I may not be able to do without you.” And he: “If that is the case, you shall find me

indispensable, and I will have my answer, 'yes,' soon whether you will or no."

I heard a little soft laugh and was sure Lily was vanquished. This was the right tone with her ; the tone of command and strength would conquer, the weak, love-sick swain could never win. But, dear, how homesick all this made me. I felt like screaming with pain, a tight clutch around my heart and a longing to hear sweet foolish words from you. Sometimes one almost envies those who never loved at all. At least they cannot suffer pain ; but strange creatures that we are, no one worth the name would give up this sweet though agonizing pain of love to be among those who never suffered.

I felt the tears spring into my eyes and at this moment who should turn up but Sir Lionel. He dropped into a seat alongside me and said, "Why those tears, lady fair, can I not help you in some way to wipe and dry them ?" Then he began to talk ; told me tales of his travels in India, Japan, Europe. Being a most interesting raconteur, he soon made me forget myself and remember there were many others in the world with far, far worse suffering than mine—much joy in the world, too.

Then we talked of what we would do in London and this fills me with great anticipa-

tion, never having put foot upon the old world before.

Dearest, remember, through all and every scene, though I am bound to enjoy each one, you shall never be absent from my thoughts and shall hold supreme sway there.

As ever and always

Yours.

LETTER IX.

DEAR HEART :

As I anticipated, the storm came last evening after the day of calm. As we went in to dinner the wind seemed to be rising to a very shriek, the waves mountain high and to be shutting us in from the outside world which we were never destined to see again.

Very few seats were taken at table, most of the passengers having gone below. Lily, Sir Lionel, Mr. Wood and I, after our very trying dinner, everything running from one end of the table to another, managed to get on deck and into a corner where we were somewhat sheltered. How the wind whistled, and the waves, rising to the sky, seemed to cry out, "Lost! lost! I am awaiting you; you cannot escape me!" Lily shivered and caught me by the arm, white to the very lips, as I know I had grown. Pitch and toss up and down, we seemed to go. At times one felt as if it were impossible, so far down we went, ever to come up. The time had come for us to learn the mysteries of the deep, only known to those who go down at sea, secrets so deep that we could not grasp

them unless we had passed to the other side through the great waters. And yet through all this fear a great grandeur thrilled one's soul, for what so magnificent as a storm at sea? Or what so fills one with a sense of the great and wonderful, though cruel forces of nature? How little we human beings beside it. How pitiful to imagine ourselves superior.

We were not far from the shores of England but this added to our anxiety. A fog seemed to be gathering. What if in this turbulent sea we should meet another vessel? Even the men who had kept our courage up through everything till now, grew anxious and nervous and a quiet fell upon our party. How long we remained thus I cannot say, only I know to me ages seemed to have passed, and yet only a few minutes. For some time our horns had been blowing. Suddenly out of the darkness a black object loomed, a sudden crash; for a moment the appalling stillness of the grave, then shrieks, hurrying of men, women and children. Voices coming out of the darkness, but I felt as if I could not move, had never moved, had always been there awaiting this moment, the voices of the sea were apparently nearer, nearer, shrieking in their delight, "I have you now; you cannot escape me; you are mine; my home is

in the great deep, and there I will take you far, far away from your love and he shall never find you."

I think no one who has not been through such an experience can imagine the agony of such moments.

For awhile I seemed to lose consciousness of where I was. I only knew we were all together, voices were speaking, prayers were being offered to God above to help us. How all, be they atheist or believer, turn to the Almighty at such times. At last I came to myself. Sir Lionel and Mr. Wood had secured life preservers for us but told us to stay where we were; not to attempt to get into a small boat in such a wild sea. No one could be saved, and if at the last we must risk our lives to a small craft on the boiling waves we would have to trust to Providence.

Some of the sailors had lost their heads, lowered a boat upon which swarmed men, women and children. Many of the first became insane, in their distraction, for this is their only plea and forgiveness, pushed both women and children aside and jumped into the boat. Away from the steamer it went, the men bent to the oars and with all their might tried to stem the mountains of water as they rose sky high. To

add to the horror, but could anything now add to "this, the waters relentlessly engulfed the little boat demanding the life cargo for their own as indemnity for some wrong the great deep had suffered years, years ago.

Suddenly the fog lifted and one could see the full length of a large vessel just alongside. The captain came near us and said, "Thank God, we are safe and saved, a hole was knocked in the other vessel but not in ours, and if those d—— sailors had obeyed orders and kept their heads no lives would have been lost. If the fog lifts sufficiently and the storm abates we can reach Plymouth to-morrow and tow the vessel Sussex in with us."

So stunned was I at the awful experience we had just gone through I could not gather myself together for some minutes, and sat like a stone with Lily's cold hand in mine. Sir Lionel's voice rose above the storm in reassuring accents, "Twenty minutes ago I thought we were all to be drowned and together were to go hand in hand to that land beyond. But, thank God, we are not called upon yet to step upon its shores."

He went below and in a moment brought both Lily and me a glass of whiskey, which he insisted upon our taking, and somehow it seemed to revive our sunken spirits, and we

awoke to the fact we were alive and were still to live. As by magic the storm ceased, and the waves gradually became smaller and smaller, the fog lifted and we were safe.

We had been on our right course, but the Sussex, a smaller vessel, had lost her bearing, and before she knew it, had run into us. Mr. Wood and Lily remained very near each other, hand in hand, feeling that once having been so near death together, they could never be separated. And so may it be is my earnest prayer for them. Sir Lionel came to me with a half humorous, half sad laugh, and said: "May I sit near you, having no one to care whether I live or die?" How sorry I feel for him. My thoughts were on you, dear, far away, wondering if surely you had not some intuition of this danger I had gone through.

How dreadful it seems; Sir Lionel has no one to care for him. A feeling of deep pity came over me, such as all good women must feel for any lonely creature. I put out my hand and touched his with some words of sympathy. It was icy cold. I asked him if there was anything I could do, and he replied; "No, I have been a fool and must bear my suffering myself."

How I wish some fine woman, able to care,



SIR LIONEL BEDFORD.

would come across his path and help him to that ideal happiness, the love of a strong man and woman for each other. Thank God, dear, I am saved to meet you again. How I look for that budget of letters sure to be awaiting me in London. I shall read them as never book was read before.

Dearest, until we meet again, ever and always

Yours.

LETTER X.

DEAREST :

We have landed. Can it be true? Am I really in England? In the old world of which one has heard and read so much? We came in sight of Plymouth at seven this morning. Of course, Lily and I were up at five, dressed and watching on deck the outlines of the old, old country of merrie England, as they grew gradually more distinct. Such a lovely early morning, the air with that freshness it never has save at the earliest hours of dawn. A few clouds overcast the sun, which was then peeping out from behind them, throwing a silvery light over all, softening the coloring of the scene before us, and, indeed, producing a most beautiful picture. This I should like to paint, and trust, perhaps, in time to reach that desired point in artistic ability.

Lily and I took our paints out and tried a most disappointing daub. But then nothing would at this moment have come near the delight of the picture in our eye. Not even the most famous of artists could have reproduced what we saw. How charming the green fields, small squares as they seemed to me,

reaching to the water's edge, a castle on one of the distant hills, houses here and there with quaint gables, and the fort to the front. One was much impressed with the smallness and compactness of the country, so different from the width and vastness of all our American scenes. It reminded one of the toys bought in shops, boxes consisting of little painted houses, trees, little men and women, animals, etc., all to be laid out according to our childish fancy.

Can it be possible that this little country has been and is so great and grand, from which we ourselves have sprung and to whom we owe so much? How odd and pretty the red sails look. In fact, everything one's eye lighted upon was quaintly new, yet old and pretty.

Lily fortunately joined in my verdant delight for she, too, had never been to England, having only travelled a little, so far, on the continent. At last we came to anchor and were taken off in a small boat and landed on English soil. Sir Lionel stood beside me directing my eyes here and there and explaining many things that were new to me. He was very indulgent to a greenhorn like myself, telling me it was a great pleasure and charm to watch my enthusiasm,

Really, dear, I was filled to the full with deep feeling at this enchanting first view of the old world so long desired by me. You can understand what I mean for I remember your telling me of your own feeling on your first trip abroad. How I wish we were together. Strange in this world we never have perfect happiness. Something is always wanting, something always withheld. It seems so horribly mean. You here and I could ask for nothing, but I suppose it is intended that I should not love this world too much. But all this seems to me so unkind. Why discipline us so when we never asked to come? I come very near crying sometimes, the pain of my longing for you is so great. Sir Lionel caught me with tears in my eyes—I was foolish enough to give way a little bit and to cry out how much I missed you and how nothing could be quite perfect without you. He was very quiet and gentle and told me not to mind him and just to use him as an outlet but to remember I had what many would give their very lives for—a great and abiding love given and returned.

"Just think," he said almost under his breath, "there lives a man who holds your heart and for whom your tears are shed—thrice blessed man." Of course this was said to brighten me up

but I do so wish Sir Lionel could find the woman he wants. Surely there must be one somewhere for he is very good and true, and if it were not for you, dear, and all my heart is given to you for ever and ever, I could imagine being very fond of him. Do not be jealous, beloved, you know I love you with all my heart and that naught until the end of time and beyond that can change this.

I must grasp opportunity and take in all that I see so as to expand for you, and myself, too, believing each one as an individual should use the powers given them.

Always with great love,

Yours.

LETTER XI.

DEAR HEART:

We have reached London. You can imagine the state I am in, fairly quivering with delight. I must begin at the beginning and tell you from the start. We landed in Plymouth, were taken into a little station where our trunks were weighed and the only attempt at an examination came from an official who said with a laugh, "No whiskey or cigars, Madam?" I indignantly said "No." "Passed," was the answer. Lily was much amused and said, "Well, you are the only suspicious looking character, the rest of us got through without any questions." "I retorted that I did not care so long as I got through, besides it showed I was the most interesting looking member of the party and of course was politely questioned."

Such a time as I had over my money and change. Sir Lionel was a godsend, helping me out and preventing my being cheated "out of my boots." I heard Lily and Mr. Wood wrangling over some of their money transactions and I am inclined to think they came out a little the worse for inexperience, for I could

not get anything out of them as to what happened. Such funny little coaches we were put into, and such a jog trot journey to London—shaken up and down all the time, but I forgot about this in my joy at just looking out of the window. Past tiny square fields, little toy-like gabled villages and towns, some fascinating watering places, such curious bath-houses on wheels in which one is rolled into the water. I think I should quite like it, a great improvement on our indecent way of all bathing in a heterogeneous mass at Atlantic City with such a chance to study the anatomy of legs and arms. One fairly sickens, there, of humanity and thinks the human animal a very disgusting creature. Here something is left to the imagination, and one can dream of possible beauties. On our side the cold truth confronts one.

I must not digress too much. On, on we went, being jolted fairly to death, but at last after getting out at several stations apparently most unnecessarily, for we were making a bee line for London, but somehow no English trip can be made without numerous changes—we arrived at Paddington Station, London.

I was fairly in a tumultuous state. This, the Mecca I had been striving to reach for so long. I felt as if I must be dreaming but was brought

to my senses by a porter asking if he could get my luggage. What a nuisance this hunting up of one's trunks. Why cannot they learn a little from us in the United States and use the check system? Mr. Wood and Sir Lionel, always ready to help, went in search of the baggage, and at last we had it all safely stowed on the top of our four wheeler, and we were rolling off to Morley's Hotel. We had decided we had best stay at a quiet hotel as we were two women alone. Sir Lionel had invited Mr. Wood to stop with him at his rooms, and besides I told Lily as chaperon I did not think it quite proper for Mr. Wood to stay with us. Lily seems quite upset and not to enjoy this arrangement at all, but as the two men promise to be with us every day I think we will find ourselves well taken care of.

Morley's is such a quiet, pleasant hotel and just the place for two lone women. We have two good rooms on the second floor, overlooking Trafalgar Square. Such a noise as the incessant busses, coaches, hansom, etc., make. A never-ending stream; never in New York have I witnessed such a sight. How beautiful and interesting the square and the fountain in front of us with Nelson's monument. The National and Portrait Gallery on one side,—St.

Martin's to our right and the hurrying Strand to the left.

It seemed almost too much to take in at once, dear. In a day or two I am looking for my budget of letters. I know it will come. At least seeing your handwriting and knowing on paper that you are thinking of me will help me, oh so much. Sometimes I think, trying to enjoy myself and cheat old Father Time brings with it great pain. The contrast between the pleasures of sight-seeing and the joys of others and one's own deep sorrow makes the pain sometimes gather great force, and almost stifles one.

But, dearest, Lily is calling me and says the two men are awaiting us down stairs for dinner. To-night we intend retiring early preparatory to our first day's excursion into the mysteries of London. A short stroll after dinner and then home to bed.

Darling as ever,

Yours.

LETTER XII.

DEAREST:

We were up betimes this morning; nothing could have kept me in bed. One must be about and seeing. Everything so new and interesting. That word new, seems so badly applied, in this connection. All new to one's eye but old, so old, it almost suffocates one. The dust of ages everywhere, buildings black with it. Bridges looking as if countless ages of men and women had passed and repassed, wearing away stones, and many, their hearts. What crimes committed under the guise of the divine right of kings or clergy.

After breakfasting on English muffins and orange marmalade and a horrid piece of cold beef, decidedly staying for a day's sightseeing, Lily and I started out for the national gallery.

One could spend hours there, and never weary as far as one's soul was concerned and be fed forever, but one's body will get tired and mind, too, for that matter. Miles of pictures after awhile tire one's feet and float lazily before one's eyes. It was truly interesting to see so many originals, Van Dycks, Sir Joshua Rey-

nolds; then in very modern art, Turners. Even representatives of that great Italian Raphael, making one feel one must push on some day to Italy, there to revel in the warm art of the Southern blood. Van Dyck, with his Dutch pictures, very fascinating, but too still and conventional, all the lines being slightly hard and crude. Surely climate affects one's efforts in every way. Sometimes I think we scarcely give weight to this.

We wandered from the principal gallery into the portrait gallery, and here were kept deeply interested for many hours. Faces of those long departed bring vividly to one's mind centuries rolled by. How real they seemed to be and to fairly speak from the canvas. The Gainsborough portraits appealed very much to me, but everywhere faces of great men and women of many centuries impressed forcibly upon one's mind how old, very old the country, and we so trivially, shamefully young. One could forgive the pride, and—shall I say it—sometimes insolence of the English. What nation could show to the world such a long unending line of great men and women? Force, power, strength in every line of their faces, to which history bears witness in their acts. Their very vices strong and the excess of virtues. Who could help

being proud of such an ancestry; and one could fight to the bitter end to uphold its supremacy. My little ambition to paint seems absolutely absurd and all other ambitions to fade within me. But knowing even a little is worth doing, I intend to continue my efforts.

How you, dearest, must have enjoyed your visit to England some years ago, and I can only wage war with fate. Why, cruel arbiter of destinies that she is, could she not in mercy have brought us here together? Does she use a kaleidoscope when she arranges matters letting everything, topsy turvy, turn up as it will? Why can she not be a careful arranger of things and make us all happy? It seems just a wilful, willful meanness, and it is impossible to get even with her or to argue in one's defense. I long for you. The pain increases so I just have to turn my back upon it and force myself to do and see, knowing at least I am growing in knowledge, and, perhaps, in that subtle thing called sympathy, and that I may be all the better when fate brings us together again. Sometimes it is almost a relief to throw all one's cares and worries upon that disagreeable feminine creature, Fate, and to keep hoping, hoping that the next time she throws the dice, she may turn up something good.

From the portrait gallery we wandered into St. Martin's, saw Nell Gwynne's grave, which gave me much food for reflection. What a charming creature she must have been, and one forgives her all, and the king, too. How could he help being fascinated? One sees so many beautiful pictures of beautiful women in this day, the reigning belles and many mistresses of the kings, falling far below our present standard of morality, but somehow as one gazes on their faces their mysterious magnetism holds one spellbound and one ceases to condemn—being fascinated in one's turn and simply wonders how anyone could resist them.

We promised to meet Sir Lionel and Mr. Wood at Mrs. Robertson's tea room at one o'clock, but this, dear, must remain for my next letter. Dear Heart, I am looking for my letter from you each day. I await my mail with fluttering heart.

As ever and always,

Yours,

LETTER XIII.

I cannot tell you, dearest, with what joy I found a budget in my mail this morning. Could it be true, was it your handwriting I saw? I fairly trembled with delight; but, true enough, there it was in my hand; my very own letter which had traveled many, many miles to meet me, and I felt sure carried all the heartfelt words I wanted and needed so—my very soul hungry for them. I went to my room, locking the door and telling Lily to leave me for an hour. Then I read your words, full of love and your longing for me and your homesickness. What dreary days, those inending ones at sea, when each one is alike and one begins to think they are never to end! But what made my heart beat, beat with joy, were the words you hoped to be sent to the Mediterranean next year. Could there be anything more delightful? There you will send for me to come and we can be happy together again; and, joy, we can bask under the Italian skies together and study their grand art. It can scarcely be true; I must not long too much or it will be denied me. How fearful one gets of one's fortunes! I

am so delighted you think there will be no real trouble with China and you can almost surely hope to be sent to Italian waters where it will be safe for me. But, *cheri*, I would, if you would let me, go anywhere to be with you, safe for me or not; for, what would life be without you? A long dreary waste. I had an hour of happiness, then Lily called me and told me I must be getting ready to go out; so, I carefully put your dear words away to be read over and over again and to be my stay till the next budget.

I think I left off yesterday just when we were about to go to luncheon at Mrs. Robertson's. There we met our two escorts and such a charming little tea-room as it was. The waitresses so pretty, clear complexions, dressed in violet gowns and white aprons and caps. Such voices, too. Such a contrast to the shrill ones of the Americans, one almost feels as if they ought not to be waiting on one, so gentle and refined their whole manners. We had a most delicious lunch; and where could one get such tea and toast as in England? Somehow, ours at home never tastes quite the same, the toast never gets ent quite so daintily and buttered so well. I complimented Sir Lionel on all the delights his country had to offer one and he most

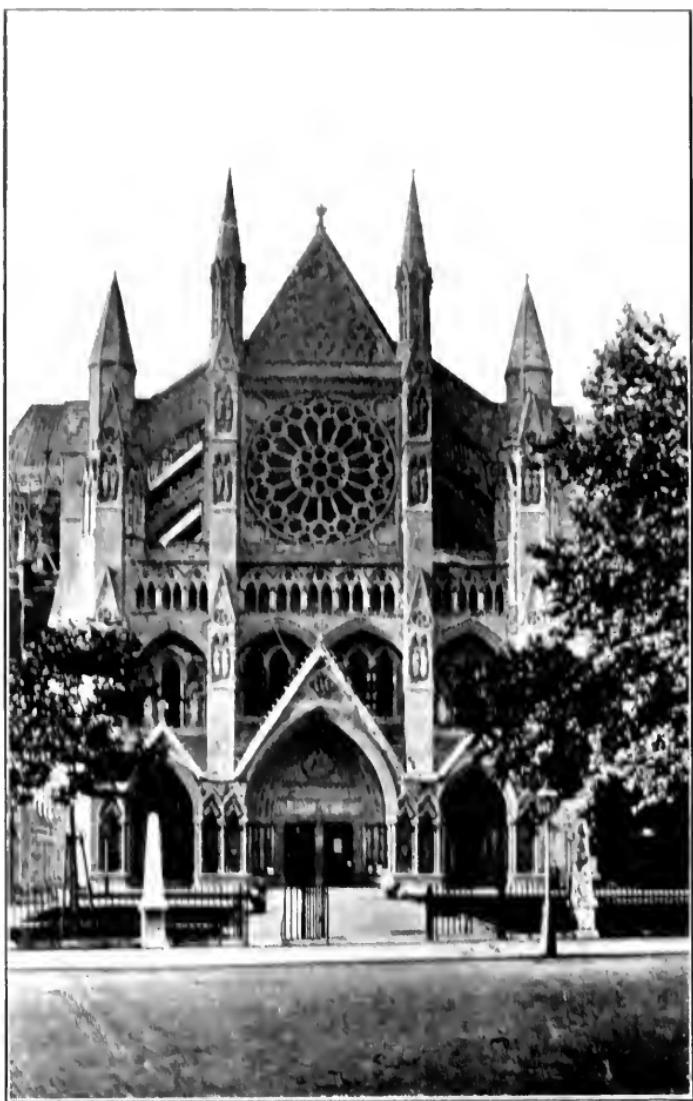
gallantly said nothing could be too much to offer me. He has a great way of paying the most charming compliments, but of course I understand them as the well-bred sayings of a cultured Englishman and he knows I am married and very much in love with my husband, though how much out of date this is. Such things as one hears of English society life. How dreadful to be mismatched! I think I could scarcely stand it and feel quite sure I would be running off with someone else's husband imagining he was more congenial. So, I must have some leniency towards these poorly-mated creatures. I think no destiny so dire as that.

After luncheon our escorts took us for a drive through the park. How interesting to see Rotten Row, Kensington Gardens and the many places one has often heard of but in my case never seen. How I like to hear the English speaking voice on every hand. How soothing and quieting! The English seem to have no nerves; and in fact, get on one's nerves sometimes; they take everything so quietly and are often so very slow. It irritates one. One's American mind cannot understand fairly creeping along in every sense of the word.

We had promised to dine at the Carlton so Lily and I had to return in time to don our evening gowns and I was quite delighted to get into a very good looking, becoming, low neck white silk, made in New York, and really one cannot get prettier gowns anywhere. Lily also had a charming pink one and I told her I was sure she would hold Mr. Wood bound in chains forever. She laughed and said that was what she intended to do and so it seemed, for he never left her side, and Sir Lionel was left to me whether he would or no. He does talk so well and interested me very much in his Indian stories ; he was out there for some years. But occasionally he gets so distract and abstracted, I wonder what is the matter. I question him sometimes and then he shakes himself together and begs me not to ask, that there are some things we must bear alone and one was a darned fool to get into trouble with one's eyes open, so I must let him alone. At times I get a little bit worried, but of course this is foolish. We had a most delightful dinner. Did you ever hear of pêche Melba ? It is delicious. We had everything the mind of man can conceive, saw some very charming looking men and women, but the aristocracy for the most part are out of town.

After dinner we went to the Gaiety Theatre and heard the comic opera, "The Toreador." Everything delightful and I returned to the hotel tired, and ready to fall into a deep sleep and dream of you, dear, who are forever in my thoughts.

Yours as ever.



WESTMINSTER ABBEY, NORTH PORCH.

LETTER XIV.

DEAREST :

We came back to the hotel quite late last night and being so very sleepy I took no time dropping off to sleep and dreaming of you. You were with me enjoying everything as I did, such perfect happiness as it was and the rude awakening this morning hard to bear. I heard Lily's voice calling me and telling me it was time I was up and about. So I forced myself to let my dreams go and get ready to start for the Abbey.

One's feeling on entering it can scarcely be described. There is a sense of awe at being surrounded on every side by the monuments of the great departed. The feeling of ages is so great one gets almost overpowered and the breath comes short. The outside world is gone, to-day is departed, and one has traveled back centuries, the past is real, the present all a dream. Surely some of the statues will arise and give us some little history of their lives themselves,

something our guide does not know, and perhaps introduce us to those about them.

What a nation, England! How proud she must be of all her heritage—an ancestry of centuries of noted men and women. Deeds both good and bad; but even though many were the latter, still courage and undaunted purpose crowned them all. Who could help a tribute of admiration at the foot of Elizabeth's tomb? Such a magnificent spirit as inhabited her body, peerless, cruel, yes, but was she not surrounded by many who would gladly have brought her to her last days? One cannot help shuddering as one looks from her tomb to that of Mary Queen of Scots and realizes that Elizabeth gave the cruel order that she should be beheaded. Would Mary have hesitated to do the same? We must remember that we cannot judge those past days by the standard of our present ones.

Thank Heaven I did not live then! Just think, one's head always in danger. But all this contributed to a dauntless and intrepid people, and it makes one wonder if in the ages to come the fact that we lead such protected lives may not make our race retrograde in point of courage and endurance. Into the poets' corner we went and here one realized what brains and wit were lying there, telling their tale of vast

mental greatness—a magnificent heritage. An overpowering sense of America being so very young comes over one; the deep quiet of ages holds one spellbound. It is fascinating, but a stifled sense of wishing to scream, to hear a voice of the present, to get out from all this heavy dust of ages, and when one walks into the air and sun an immense relief that all is not dead, comes over one.

People are stirring, talking, the air moves and England still breathes. One almost feels that she must have come to her last days she is so very old, and has so much behind her. But she is destined to be still older for her vitality is great yet. It must teach us Americans to push on and strive to make a history ever growing grander as the centuries roll and we attain mature life. Sir Lionel and Mr. Wood were with us. The former said "how deeply you feel everything; don't do it, it is bad." But I told him I did not think this, there was nothing like keeping one's heart young, pliable and able to receive impressions, in this way one could keep youth no matter how old the body might grow.

"Well," he said, "at any rate it is most interesting to go about with you and things seem to take a new meaning." Dear, I told you before I was a little worried once in awhile. He

is a gentleman, brave and good, and as such he will always treat me, but the fear that he might take an unfortunate liking for me comes over me at times. He would suffer in silence, I know, but I should really hate this. He is truly fine and I want him to find some splendid woman for himself. He told me not long ago he thought a person might hold a hopeless passion in his heart, never telling it and never harming the person loved, but doing all one could to make that loved one happy. That he thought in this way one often could glean as much happiness as was allowed to mankind. This is very fine and unselfish, but, dear, once knowing the perfect love of giving and receiving, one feels that one would give all to experience this. Then I feel that I have no right to complain. This I know, and it can never be taken from me. Your letters I read over and over, learning them by heart and holding them sacred there.

I asked Lily what she thought about Sir Lionel. She replied, "Don't worry, sometimes I have thought he takes a deep interest in you but believe me it will never harm you and let him be happy." Perhaps she is right and nothing could be more kind and courteous than he.

Lily and Mr. Wood are progressing finely and I often let her talk to me at night, and I

like to watch the sweet light that illumines her face and do not wonder that any man loves her. She is looking very beautiful, and is so bright and sweet. How she loves to travel! I think Mr. Wood will have a hard time keeping her at home. As yet there is no formal engagement as Lily wishes to return to her family first.

We go to the Cecil to dine to-night and then to the theatre. The end of the week we leave London and take a trip to Windsor, Oxford, Stratford, and from there go for a day or two to Sir Lionel's sister's country home, Lady Francis Grenville.

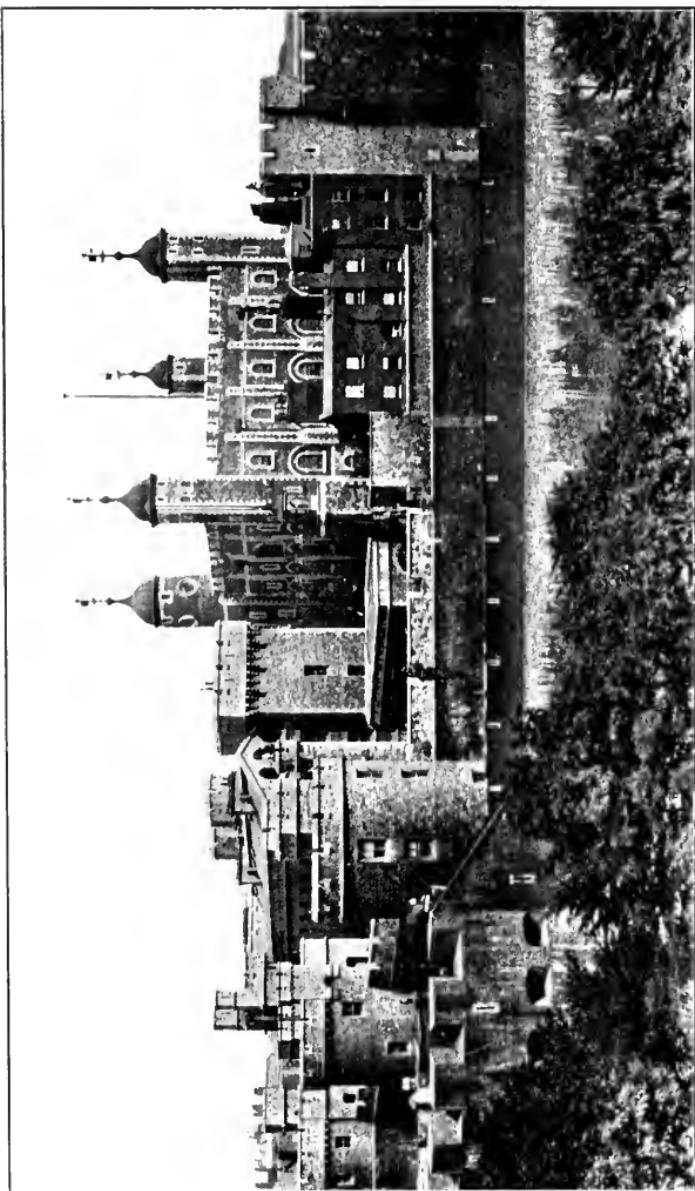
Dearest, always and ever,
Yours.

LETTER XV.

DEAREST :

To-morrow we start off on our little trip through the country. I think everything necessary to be seen for our purpose in London we have accomplished in a week. Traveling in true American fashion we are able to see every-no matter how short the time. How magnificent St. Paul's! We climbed to the whispering gallery, and by the time I got there I was fairly breathless. Those eternal winding stairs never would come to an end. I think I annoyed the guide very much for not realizing our voices could be heard from one side to the other. I turned to Lily and said several things to her in a low tone, but to my horror they were heard by those on the opposite side, and interfered with their hearing the guide's little speech. Poor me, I felt quite squelched when I was requested to keep quiet. Perhaps it were well for me if this were oftener the case.

What a beautiful and grand view one has of London from the outside gallery. How glad I was that I had "done" it. Those stairs had been climbed and I could say I had seen London



THE TOWER.

from the top of St. Paul's. Human nature being as it is, this is a great pleasure.

How I enjoyed our visit to the tower. Seeing where Elizabeth had walked, been kept prisoner, and many other noted people. What horrible dungeons those, one where a man could not lie down, eternally standing until the spirit grew too weak and left the standing body; another where a man could only lie down. How devilish the mind of man in those long gone-by days. A very revelry in diabolical tortures. Perhaps those who invented them were to fall victims to their own inventions. One would think this would hold their hands and minds. But the cruel desire of inflicting pain on others was too great. What awful memories the court-yard and spot roped off where the executions took place. The very spot where Lady Jane Gray went bravely to her death. A sickening horror seized me and I almost turned back; but no, one must see the room where the little princes died by the cruel order of their uncle. How strange to find it a pleasant little room with skylight (recently put there), a young girl's bedroom, the daughter of the warden.

I exclaimed and said, "I should think bad dreams would fill the brain of one who slept

here." The warden answered, "No, Madam, we are a family here, and where the voices of children ring, there no ghosts can live." A good rejoinder I thought to my foolish fears, but all the same I know I would not have liked being in that young girl's place. We looked down the stairs, at the bottom of which the little princes were supposed to have been buried. Poor little beings, one does not like to let one's mind dwell on these awful things. How grateful to be living now.

We visited the British Museum, Zoological Gardens, Hertford House Collection, Wallace Collection, Mme. Tussaud's Wax Works, Carlyle's home in Chelsea, and one place not among the least, "Cheshire Cheese Inn." We persuaded Sir Lionel and Mr. Wood to take us which they valiantly did. I had the honor of sitting in Samuel Johnson's chair and drinking a glass of very old rare sherry, the true old gold. I gave my seat to Lily so that she, too, could be inspired by that seat and feel filled with fire and witty sayings. I was certain I was saying all sorts of fine things afterwards, but Lily says she is sure that glass of old sherry helped give its quota to my clever speeches. At this I was quite indignant, and told her how I had noticed how unnecessarily quick at

repartee she was. Dear Lily, she always is—and needs no inspiration save her own.

I think all the theatres saw us but many of the best actors and actresses were away. One thing struck me forcibly. Though sweet-voiced and often good actresses the English women were so angular. Still when beautiful, with their aristocratic bearing, very perfect.

I love England, but, dear, I would not give up my own fair country where all is fresh and green and new. We hope for all things, and our veins are full of pulsing life-giving blood. We are ready for the fray and our history has only just begun—the first pages only written, and the joy of the unwritten still before us.

Darling, how delighted I was with a second budget of letters. They are my greatest happiness. I see you write something every day, and to think I am ever in your thoughts fills me with untold delight. Sir Lionel and Lily say that after I have received a budget from you I am well worth seeing, my face becoming quite beautiful with joy. Lily says if I wish to keep young I must get you to write letters to me every day forever. Foolish girl, she is so bright and happy. There is nothing that is not a delight to her; she dives into everything and I do not let my duties as a chaperon weigh too heavily

and often find an excuse to return from some excursion a little earlier than she and Mr. Wood. Hours after they turn up with beaming faces, but somehow I find they never remember much of what they have seen. I would not interrupt "Love's young dream" for the world. How I wish we could keep youth with us forever. I do so hate old age.

One thing that has struck me forcibly with the English is their way of always putting a question mark at the end of their sentences. They are much afraid of ridicule and seem to fear the quick-witted American is always ready to laugh at them.

At the British Museum one of the guards showed us what was apparently a miniature juggernaut car. He told us it came from Mexico, and I remarked, "Of course it is only a small representative of one." "Why, the man who sold it told me it was a real one, he could not have lied to me, could he?" It was all I could do to keep from laughing. Such their sense of humor!

Dearest, as ever,

Yours.



WINDSOR CASTLE, FROM THAMES.

LETTER XVI.

DEAR HEART :

This morning we left that great throbbing world with its never ceasing roar, travelled by land to Kensington, where we took a boat on the Thames to Windsor. Oh the peace, and quiet, and joy that settled on one's nerves strained to a pitch by the never ending whirl of the great metropolis ! One seemed to be getting near to nature, the splash of the water, reviving to the senses, brought that refreshment to the soul needed by one who is heart sick. At times silent, voiceless nature. The trees, woods, streams, flowers, seem to understand and give that sympathy that no human being can. One returns from a few short days spent in the open, able to take up with renewed energy what lies before one. A sense of ability to do and dare, and to succeed with whatever one's undertakings may be, a wish to enter into the strife.

But, beloved, to return from my poor vagaries, which I know you will smile at, as you read, but forgive, because you know and understand, we boarded our own boat, of course, the four of us. I full of a childish glee and

delight at reaching the fields and river and sun and air. So peacefully quiet and yet full of intense restful pleasure, the gentle movement as we glided along the Thames. I think there is nowhere such rest as upon English country soil. Removed from the bustle of London, one seems to have come upon such conventional quiet and peace.

Literally all the bustle of life seemed improper. Surely those dear little prim English maids would think it very unseemly to do anything in a hurry. To attempt anything out of home or church quite beyond the pale of respectability. One loves them but after one has had one's fill of quiet, one wearies of them and desires to try one's powers in the midst of the bustle of life.

Cannot these sweet young things be taught to live and feel? Is it not sometimes one of the causes of so many unhappy matches? Man, the great mogul (mein herzchen, excuse this, you, of course, are different), in his selfish desire to own everything, and in his fear that if he allows womankind to use her powers she would escape him, has so held her bound that at last the very thing he wants is gone. She is prim, sedate, no feeling, but the most conventional left in her, all real passion gone. It is

unconventional, unladylike. And that creature man, again selfish, weary as a spoiled tyranical ruler with what he has himself ordered in his blindness, throws aside the insipid creature. He complains, my wife is so stupid, unsympathetic. And so she is, and one cannot blame his desire for something real and broad. But is it not his own fault? Give woman freedom to expand her feminine powers, and in doing this the lord and master of creation will find he has a very fascinating creature. But let her remember always her powers are feminine, and must ever remain so and are truly her glory.

Dear Heart, I have digressed far from our day on the Thames. We passed, as in a dream, charming villas, bungalows, house-boats and all the life to be seen on a summer day upon the Thames. Going through the funny little locks amused me, watching some amateur boat races quite exciting. We stopped now and again at landings. At one a party of charming women boarded our little boat—truly English, and dressed as country English maidens frequently are—atrociously. One with quite a good figure and clear English voice, bright color, and hair attracted me greatly. She was full of vim, decidedly she did not belong to the prim order. She seemed to

pulsate with warm life, to answer to every sensation. One could see she could attract, and hold spellbound, the other sex (this the sensible aim of every true woman). Two young men of athletic build rushed to the shores, calling their adieux to her and begging for a speedy return. The others of the party seemed to be left in the background. They appeared to be very sweet, but sadly lacking in any enthusiasm.

On, on up the river we went and stopped at Windsor. There we alighted and dined at the White Hart. How charming these English Inns and how often one gets such appetizing things to eat. But then I think anything would taste good to us now.

I like sometimes to get off by myself, but somehow Sir Lionel always turns up. Dear, I cannot be rude and really he always behaves so well. He wonders how I will enjoy my visit to his sister. He tells me there are many things in English society life that ought to shock me. But I tell him he quite excites my curiosity.

We went through Windsor Castle, and were filled with awe actually beholding the rooms, beds, chairs, etc., in which royalty lived. But then I suppose, poor creatures, they are fash-



STOKE POGES CHURCH.

ioned just like ourselves. We go to Stoke-Pogis this afternoon, and then to Oxford, but of this to-morrow.

Chéri, last night you came to me in my dreams. Thank heaven for these short moments!

Always dearest,

Yours.

LETTER XVII.

DEAR HEART:

How delightful our visit to Stoke-Pogis. I stood beside the monument erected to Gray, and could almost feel the elegy as I recited it to myself. His inspiration seemed to fill me, and I understood how here, and nowhere else, could it have been written. The peace of an English twilight was descending upon the landscape, those grand and beautiful elms throwing dark shadows, and a feeling of sadness filled me.

That church, so full of memories; that yew-tree seemed to have been known by me for ages. Was it not a friend known long, long ago? Gray's tomb to belong to one! Sir Lionel came to me and said: "Can I be allowed to enter your thoughts? I should like to know how all this impresses you. Somehow few people seem to feel as you do. Write them and give so many the pleasure of your vivid impressions."

This amused me, for I fear few would care to read. Dear, perhaps I will try some day, but you must help me. There, that is the great pleasure of having some good, strong man

behind one. To help one use one's powers to the best. You, beloved, are my inspiration. If I had not known you I could never have expanded. You, the masculine complement to my feminine nature, have brought forth all the feeling in me; without you it must have died, and so it is with all women. They must come to the fullness of their being, meet and love some one of the other sex.

This has been true from the beginning, and will be to the end. No platform woman ever will be a success, she simply stunts her being, and becomes an abnormal creature, horrible to behold.

Dear, I have been trying my sketches. Some I am quite pleased with, and I shall tack up all in my studio next winter and keep them for you. When we get home Lily is to try my portrait and I hers. These are to be our first serious attempts in that line. If a failure, we will not hold each other very seriously responsible.

After an hour or so of delightful wandering through the churchyard, and under the neighboring elms (and how full to overflowing were one's thoughts), we took the train to Leamington and from there to Oxford. We drove to the Mitre Inn, where, fortunately, we were in time for the evening meal; but, dear, how I do

hate cold joints of all kinds. Why is it the English simply revel in them? I consider it very coarse taste. When one is hungry and cold after a long journey, how trying a cold supper.

After our meal we were taken to our rooms; but so frightened as I was! Lily had her room on one floor and I mine away round a narrow little hall on the next. I entered with trepidation. A high bedstead, room for anyone to creep under, a valance surrounded it, an old mahogany bureau, washstand, etc., and a candle to light myself to bed with. Truly rural and old, old fashioned. Why is it England, the supposed centre of the civilized world, has such old-time accommodations? Gas or electricity out of the question.

Still there is a charm in the quaint old times one feels, though a little creepy in an old wing. I did so long for you. I knew I could have faced ghosts or any horrors with you there. You are so good and strong nothing evil would have dared face you. But here was I facing the midnight terrors of a country inn by myself. I hardly liked to blow out the light but I could not keep a candle burning all night, so with a thumping heart I took courage, and, whiff, out the light went; but dear me how I started at



THE HIGH STREET.



THE ISIS AND BARGES.



VIEW FROM MAGDALEN TOWER.

every sound. The furniture creaked so and queer noises came from outside. Heavy treads near my door, and after I had lain trembling for some time, a knock. To open it seemed almost impossible, but at last after a few repeated knocks I summed up courage and unbolted the door. Who should be there but Lily. She exclaimed, "I cannot sleep in that horrid old four poster with my room facing the courtyard, and a low window; then a disagreeable looking foreigner has the room next me. Please let me in, if you don't mind, you can make room for me alongside of you."

Needless to say I was delighted to have her. At first I pretended to think her very foolish and silly but at last I confessed to having been cold with fright and only too glad to welcome her. And so with one another to buoy our sinking spirits we managed to fall asleep and opened our eyes the next day upon a flood of sunshine. All our fears gone, and ready to take a peep into the sanctuaries of learning.

Ah, dear, more and more do I want you and long for you. May the time fly on wings till I feel your arms about me again. Always,

Yours.

LETTER XVIII.

DEAREST :

Early this morning we started on our tour through this city of learning, musty with the secrets of ages. A guide was secured, immaculately dressed and with a fine cast of features, but I am quite sure with scarce a penny to bless himself. The intolerance of the narrow-minded untraveled Englishman showed through all he said. He acted as scout (I believe they call it), during the college season and nowhere, according to him, could there be such a set of young gentlemen, in his estimation far outdoing the professors, who were only there as a background for the students. There seemed to be a general system of honor pervading the young men, but, "Don't catch me, don't have me," seemed to be, according to our guide, a decidedly pervading motto.

Certainly their lives are full of interest and boyish glee and fun. What struck me forcibly was the old, old-time appearance of the colleges, many having the look of cloisters, and one's mind was carried back centuries and innumerable past scenes floated before one. Ghosts of

the dead past could inhabit these walls and crowd out the young men of the day who have no right there. Though the scenes of the past and history are very alluring, still at times it seems to throttle one and to-day wrinkles, bones and skeletons are cast aside. I feel quite sure if I had to live my young life amid these old walls, I should take on the complexion of the place and become an old, old hermit, book worm, who would occasionally crawl out from his niche in the wall, but, frightened by the sun, and light, and action, quickly crawl back again.

To my mind these magnificent old buildings seemed scarcely the place for youth. One could enjoy to the full a short stay there and ruminate with delight upon the past lives of great men; statesman, poet, historian, warrior, all glide in turn before one. But always the past; and youth with its natural pulsating life running through every vein must turn from the ages that were, to the time that is and is to come, wishing to push forward in the strife, and letting the dead past bury its dead.

Our American colleges and universities flood with life—youth, activity everywhere, all is before and one feels this to the core. These young men, full of new fresh blood like racers snorting

for the fight, long to make the history of the land, and this with a full determination that it shall be a grand one. Love, you see that I am a good American, though the subtle influence and inspiration of the great past, that nowhere one can learn to the full better than in England, pervades me to day, and I am old, very old, and live in the lives of the centuries gone.

With a start, I find Lily bringing me to. I am again in the twentieth century and answering some very profane question. Really it is very annoying when one is enjoying oneself immensely with imaginings in the past—peopling the corridors with one's heroes to be so rudely awakened to the present. I answered quite crossly and was, to say the least, a little disagreeable. Lily is always so sweet, though, and says, "You foolish dreamer, I suppose I must forgive you everything." But then remember, she has Mr. Wood and is so happy. How I envy her—I want you so, want you so. If you were beside me, near me, to enter into all my feelings with me; and you, dear, to let me see with your eyes just a little, and so to broaden my horizon and make me all the better woman for it. There are moments when my heart gets so sick of waiting for you that I scarcely breathe, and the oppression of the



EXETER COLLEGE AND SHELDONIAN THEATRE.



CHRIST CHURCH, WEST FRONT.



MAGDALEN COLLEGE AND BRIDGE.

longing gets so great that I wonder if my last breath has come. Will the days between now and our next meeting ever pass? They go so slowly, oh, so slowly.

Well, dearest, we went through Christ Church, Trinity, Magdalen, Jesus, Balliol and others, and by the time the day was over I was fairly ill--so tired was I and almost felt like never seeing another thing. Sir Lionel was splendid; he told us so many delightful stories of his college days, showed us his apartments and made our day indeed vivid, so real he made everything. I thanked him warmly, and he so kindly said my thanks were enough to make the day a bright one for him. He has been begging me to write a journal to be published. He says he knows it would be vivid and good; but, dear, my words and impressions are for you, content to remain in your heart, all the audience they desire.

Dear, Sir Lionel does seem to take interest in what I say and do, and sometimes I think it would be better for himself, for my heart is ever yours, if he saw less of me and more of some other woman. For after all, mon mari, every heart wishes to love and be loved and there is much in propinquity when one's nature is unsatisfied. Sir Lionel needs some good and beau-

tiful woman to take care of him and so I tell him. He never says or does a thing he should not, but somehow I cannot help thinking he ought to see some one else but me. I tell Lily my fears, and she always says, "Don't worry, he is a man and a gentleman and if he enjoys being your friend, why, give him that happiness."

He frequently tells me he would far rather have the friendship of his ideal woman, if he were denied her love than the love of an unideal woman. Well, dear, there seems nothing for me to do but be a friend and try some day to throw an ideal woman in his path.

Mein liebchen, I am tired to-night but did enjoy my day with the learned colleges and the past, as I walked around Addison's walk and tried to imagine what his thoughts were.

How beautiful some of the green swards, and surely where but in England can green grass be so emerald green save, perhaps, on old Ireland's shore. What a beautiful view, that from the bridge of Magdalen College and river, and how often one sees this in an etching. I must have it on my return and keep it in that home we are to have, you and I, in the dear, dear future. We are on to-morrow to Stratford, but anon of this.

My eyes are closing and I must to bed, hoping
for my dreams of you.

Dream, dear, of me, and let us meet in the
dreamland where I can tell you that I am and
always will be

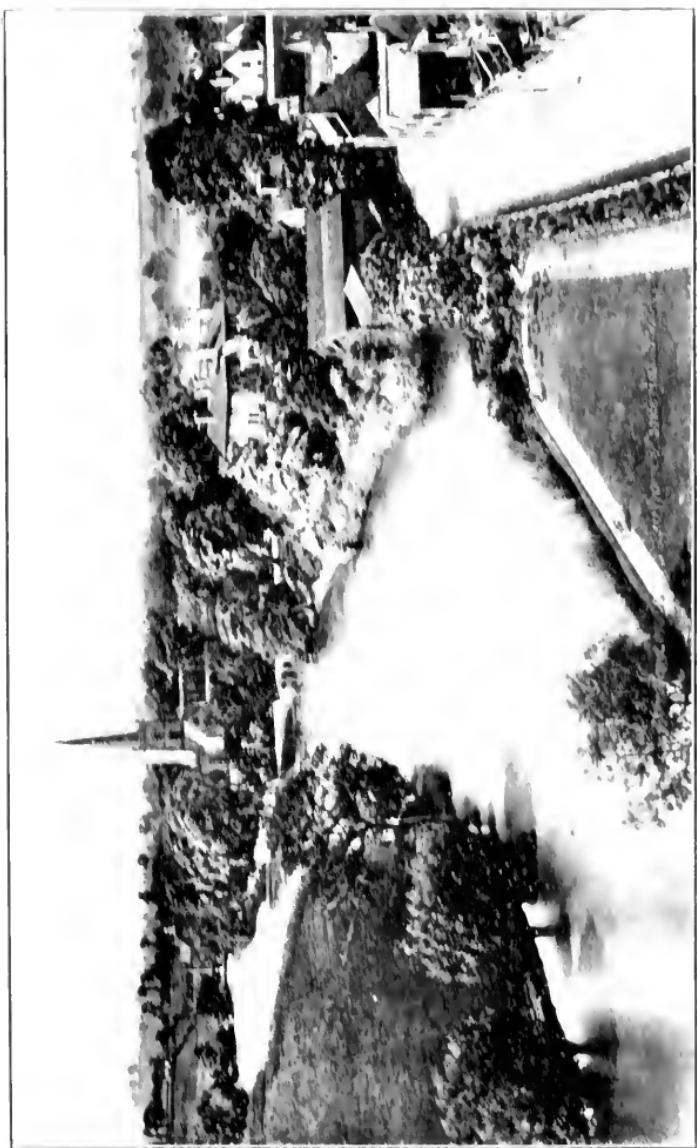
Yours.

LETTER XIX.

DEAR HEART:

Here we are at Stratford, at the Red Horse Inn. We arrived last night and to-day have wandered over the paths that Shakespeare trod. To the church we went and read the inscription over his bones, and I felt quite sure the malediction would not rest upon us as we certainly had no intention of removing them. His bust stood in a niche in the wall near by, and one fell to studying the features of such a wonderful man, a brain so full one wonders how an ordinary head could contain all those magnificent dreams replete with wit and deep sayings and truths of human nature. It almost makes one think the great art of writing is dead, for who could dream of approaching this man?

We wandered out into the graveyard, and somehow in the bright, warm sunshine the graves seemed very friendly and not such dreadful resting places. English country is very soothing. On we walked to the theatre, but this is a crude, modern, unattractive building, many interesting books and pictures about, but with no memories of its own. From here to



STANLEY PARK, NEW YORK, JULY 1912. MR. J. F. C. STANLEY

Shakespeare's house, and, ah, here you can imagine what interest centres. Did his imaginings grow in such protracted space?

One would think his thoughts would have almost burst the bounds of the low ceilings. In his boyish roamings much must have been learned of the laws of nature and he the one to learn from her and hold her great secrets. To grow so great in such a narrow home and surroundings seems scarcely possible, but sometimes I am inclined to think narrow physical limits make the soul grow, and after, travel was simply a needed touch to make the mind of this man perfect and in accord with all the world. Its real growth and depth had reached maturity in this narrow home. What had he to learn—all had been made clear to him in the fields and under the skies which in the daytime had their bright lessons and in the night their great and deep mysterious ones. Its human surroundings, many narrow and sordid, made his great nature by contrast yearn for nobler things and so his desires grew. Perhaps in too luxurious surroundings they would have been stifled with too easy living.

From Shakespeare's home, where I could have lingered long, we wandered to Anne Hathaway's cottage, a charming little spot, so

sweet and homelike, and here many of the village beaux would gladly linger to while away a few hours in the company of the witching Anne. I fear though Anne did not keep up the reputation later and did not prove the best of wives to her great husband. Perhaps she should have some sympathy. Being a simple ordinary-minded woman, she may have found the strain too great keeping up with such a husband.

Perhaps married to a man with a mind suited to her level, she might have been happy. Such cases make one feel it is only fair to set them free—each to find his proper mate. Is this too heretical, dear? Perhaps the mate could not be found and they would only sink in deeper water.

One thing that interested me very much was seeing Marie Corelli's home. Not that I think very much of her writings; for, to me, they are full of overwrought imagination; but still, she is a powerful woman and writes strongly—I hear she dresses most extraordinarily and this I do dislike so. Why cannot a woman write and be normal, too? Be herself a woman and she will retain that sweet naturalness and charm of femininity, but let her strive after some abnormal effect and she is lost,

So, John Harvard, the founder of our university, was born and lived here. How much we owe to English ancestors ! and frequently I think we are far from grateful. To end our pleasant rambles we took a row upon the Avon. Such delight as this was after our hard working though seductively interesting day. The peace of the English scene fell upon us, the boat glided under the skilful direction of Mr. Wood and Sir Lionel through the waters, and such a sense of rest came upon me. I sank back into my seat and gave my whole being up to the joy of just living ; and drinking in the soft air. Then dreams of you came and I was so happy, or as near so as one could be without the actual presence. I think I fell asleep, for bumpity-bump, and I was rudely awakened. We had come to the landing and it was time to return to our Inn if we expected any supper. My inner man, or rather woman, in my case, told me this was very necessary and the rest of the party fully agreed with me ; so, we fairly flew home, finding a smoking supper most enticing to the nostrils and palate.

To-morrow we drive to Warwick Castle and Kenilworth and the day after we are expected by Lady Francis Grenville to stop over night with her. We cannot give more time as we

must on to Paris, Lily having promised to return within two months. Then we must get our studio ready for the winter. Dear, I must tell you, Lily has painted some lovely scenes and I flatter myself so have I. They will always be such a never-ending source of delightful remembrance of our trip. But as you know we fly very high and desire to paint portraits. I now and again sketch the party, different members individually, and next winter have them all promised as patrons. This will be a good beginning at any rate.

Such a charming drive in the moonlight as we had after supper. The English twilight lasting till nine and throwing such a beautiful haze over everything; then the moon rose and all was silvery grey.

The mystery and delight of England filled me. But, dear, I am very, very sleepy and must to bed.

The days are speeding to our next meeting.

Yours forever and ever.

LETTER XX.

DEAREST :

To-day we hired a carriage and started out early on our excursion to Warwick Castle and Kenilworth.

To me there is a great charm in the English scenes, the grass so green, the trees so old and large and hedges kept as if it were a sin to let them grow. Do the prim little English maids come out with their brooms and dusters in the early morning and sweep off the dirt and dust accumulated during the night on fields and roads of my lady's ancestral acre?

One feels she must come out each day and adjust her lorgnette to the better see that no speck lies upon her beautiful green swards. Not to have these perfect would be the unpardonable sin, and my poor little maid would suffer forever afterward, certainly in my lady's lower regions.

This sense of driving in a continuous well-laid park is pleasing for awhile. The easy motion of the carriage over the hard roads, made years and years ago, tends to make one very sleepy and before one knows it one is taking a quiet little nod. Lily is

relentless at these moments and pokes me to make me stay awake and says I must not learn so quickly English dowagers' lessons. Sometimes, dear, I must confess, when we are on the go from morn to dewy eve with no respite I get cross and say, I will not go another step and do not care if I never see another thing. I could see the party's comical expression as I gave vent to these sentiments one afternoon in London after a weary, weary day of sightseeing and we were far from home. I meant every word I said and do not think I would have stirred till this day if I could have stayed there, if Mr. Wood had not found an easy vehicle whose driver, at a promise of an exorbitant price, undertook to get us back to our hotel.

When we reached our rooms Lily fell into a chair and simply laughed at my poor, tired, done-up self. "Well," she said, "you are a nice one to take sightseeing, and I think you gave the men a pretty good scare, for what we would have done with you if no vehicle had turned up in that out of the way quarter I do not know. Your expression more than your decided words made me think you would stay forever where you were unless we could get some means of easy locomotion home."

I retorted that I thought it a very mean



WARWICK CASTLE, FROM THE RIVER AVON.

thing to wear another's legs out ; to wear their own out they had a legitimate right, but if they attempted the same ill-usage of mine again I would sue them all and get a high sum for the damage done. Lily laughed and said, "All right, I'll pay my share ; but now, you dear old thing, I intend to ring for supper and have it here, you and I together comfortably arrayed in our tea gowns. You put on your pretty fluffy pink one, you do look so sweet in it, and I will don my blue one, in which I know I am quite fetching."

Lily said she was so sorry that she could not call Mr. Wood into see her. Naughty, but delightful girl. Somehow her light vanities and our tea gowns, which are very pretty and becoming, besides a delicious light and hot supper, daintily served on a tray by the daintiest of English maids dissipated—shall I say my ill temper !

To return to our day at Warwick Castle.

Such a charm as this grand old castle has for me. We drove through a long winding road, cut between two rocks, each side of which was covered with green ivy. Over the moat we went and under the portcullis which I felt sure would fall upon me. Then we were met by a very nice English guide, who took us through

a side entrance and up some winding stairs, around the walls of which were hung old armor, fighting implements of ancient days of all kinds. To think how much of English history hung around this place. The earls of Warwick at whose command so many bent—even kings. Their very title holds a peculiar power.

Through grand great staterooms we were taken, hung with ancient tapestries and portraits of the former owners of this great ancestral home. The rooms in which Queen Victoria slept when visiting these honored subjects were shown us, and from the window such a beautiful glimpse of the river flowing underneath, and the surrounding country. To me, shall I own it, poor old Queen Victoria, God rest her soul, has little romance. A fine old lady full of sturdy character, but I fear quite obstinate, perhaps a little mulish sometimes. Her portraits fail to fill one with the mysticism of high-bred aristocratic bearing and we of the plebeian mold demand this, otherwise we cannot render that homage due to Cæsar. At least, dear, I cannot, but perhaps, being full to the brim of American independence, I cannot feel as the truly correct English women do. I do so pity them at times, they must feel so to order. I should be kicking at the traces all the time.

Here I am travelling off again, so back to our party and guide. On he takes us to the red-panelled room and here upon the wall hangs the portrait of the present Lady Warwick, by Carolus Duran. Here one can bow to the subtle influence of the high-bred English beauty. Beautiful, but with the haughty bearing, her heritage from a long line of noble ancestors. One can bow to this, for whatever the individual (for one remembers little quiet stories that Queen Victoria did not always smile upon this magnificent creature, though tell me, dear, does not jealousy often lie at the core of an ugly woman's censure of a beautiful one?) this high-bred, fascinating creature on canvas stands for all that is beautiful and great in a long line of noble ancestry. Surely this red-panelled room was made for the portrait not the portrait for the room. The red panels so suited to the red background of the picture. All seems in harmony, and the sense of just proportions fills one.

Our guide offers a peacock's feather to the youngest of the party and to my shame I must decline it and offer it to Lily, my love of truth coming to the fore, but if at this crucial moment it had failed me Lily, with her undying sense of rectitude, would have demanded her right. So

she has the trophy to add to our collection for our studio next winter.

Lady Warwick had just arrived but our guide kindly allowed us a glimpse into the sacred realms of her private apartments if we promised to be very quiet and tip-toe to the large folding doors as he opened them. One really expected to find them disclose some long ago baronial scene and was almost disappointed to find this large living room so natural and furnished with all the latest English comforts. But what gave to the grand old apartment its right of belonging to the past was the armor seen hanging everywhere and in one corner a warrior encased from head to foot in a coat of mail. Surely he was stationed there to protect the lady of the castle from all harm. Such wild barbarians as ourselves might do some hurt.

We wandered into the flower gardens and enjoyed so the peaceful thoughts that flitted through our minds in my lady's rose bower. Here no thoughts of evil could enter.

Dearest, I must stop, but not until this letter carries, too, its message and burden of love from me to you. This is ever old and new, being from the beginning and lasting through eternity.

Yours ever and always.

LETTER XXI.

Oh, my dear, I cannot tell you with what delight I opened another budget from you this morning. Your dear words warm my heart so that I feel the blood pulsating to the very end of my fingers. That is the reason I look so well and my color is so good to the end of the day. Your letters are better than any cosmetic or even the sun and air. I love to read that you miss me and that you are jealous of the very days that hold me till you come. What a charming, delightful way you have of writing. I think no woman ever received such love letters as I, and to think this is all addressed to me. Dear, husband, will I ever fall from my pedestal and will you find your idol clay? For after all, dear, I am naught but dust, and the dread fear fills me that some day you will find me out. At least, I will strive to be what you think me and trust that if I fail your eyes may be holden not to see.

Dearest, for days your letters buoy me up to such an extent that I could almost walk on air and the party tell me I am never so brilliant.

I think I did not tell you of our visit to

Kenilworth. The ruins stood there a pathetic reminder of the times that were past and the terrible fate of poor Amy who dwelt there. Sir Lionel wished to climb through the haunted memory-laden passages with me, but I would have none of him. Alone I must be to enjoy in silence the thoughts that crowded upon me. I imagined here was the old dining hall, there the stately bedchamber where the poor fair owners often trembled in their dread. I looked down into dungeons and found myself weeping for those who had long since lain there in chains, but many, many years ago had gone to their last account. Perhaps, who knows, they were floating near and blessed me for my tears.

I think I will have to stop pretending to be a chaperon at all. Lily disregards all I have to say and yes (shall I have to confess it), I often conveniently lag behind or profess weariness when I think my absence would be more appreciated than my presence. Lily says I am the most tactful of chaperones, but consequently I am left to entertain Sir Lionel, who ends by entertaining me and making himself most agreeable.

You are not jealous, dear, I know, for I believe you know and trust me, for if you were

not what you are—the truest, best, and noblest of men, free from all petty doubt—I could not love you as I do. Bound by too tight a suspicious rein I would hate the driver and just run away and give the poor man an upsetting that it would take him sometime to recover from. I must be trusted, then I give as to you my all. A curious part of the complex nature of woman is, that though she love her husband—love him as she may, the admiration of another man cannot help being pleasing. She knows the power this has to hold her husband. Strange masculinity! The knowledge that what he owns is held to be of some worth by another, adds tenfold to the charm of possession. Please forgive me, dear, for saying this, but I know your sex and this is true. Sometimes I am inclined to think it would be well if the laws of matrimony were not so binding, you men were not allowed to feel you had your game so safe within your hands for then, dear, you would never tire of your prey. Then the divorce courts would cease to exist for want of use. But, *chéri*, you shall never tire of me, I shall keep you guessing, wondering what is coming next.

Let all women remember this; men love spirit, and this they must hold to as their very lives, not only for the sake of pleasing men, but

for their own sakes for that individuality, a priceless treasure, without which no man or woman is worth the name or having either.

I ask you to demand this of me as I do of you, for without your wishing this I could not hold you for the noble creature that you are. This makes the true union between man and woman and once existing there is no danger of its breaking. Without it love and marriage fall to a very commonplace, uninteresting level from which all true natures must revolt.

To-morrow we go to Lady Francis Grenville's. I am looking forward to our visit with the greatest pleasure. We can only give her the night and day, for we must return to London, where we pick up our luggage and on to Paris, that land of the gay.

I believe quite a large dinner party has been invited to meet us. We arrive in the middle of the day, are to be taken all over the estate, some friends to five o'clock tea and dinner at eight o'clock. I feel a little nervous about it, but know I have a beautiful white chiffon and lace gown, low neck, and decidedly becoming. Lily has a beauty of pink embroidered crêpe-de-chine, and one need have no fear of the English verdict as to her splendid beauty. I want them to think well of us as Americans, and for my

country I have the great pride that we should do it credit. Some Irish women are to be of the company and one I hear most beautiful, with that ready wit that belongs to their nationality. Lily and I must not disgrace ourselves. Mr. Wood says it is all going to be a dreadful bore, for what does he care for all the women, we are enough for him. Do you notice the "we"? That he puts in for politeness, but he says he never can repay sufficiently such a charming chaperon who knows her business so well.

On our return to London we stay two days, going to Richmond, Hampton Court, Kew Gardens and to Greenwich, where I long to see all the reliques kept as mementos to the great and honored Nelson.

Dear, I forgot to tell you how impressed I was with all the crown jewels. How they glittered and the crowns seemed so heavy that I did not wonder, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." How into insignificance all the little jewels that I treasure so highly and those of many of the women I knew sank. How, with true feminine weakness, I love the glittering stones and when the possessor of them fairly feel a queen myself. I wear your gift, a diamond necklace, to-morrow night and no matter how I enjoy myself I shall have you

ever near me and the necklace will help to stem that awful homesickness that besets me among strangers. How I long for you, and no one, no crowd, can keep you from me.

Always lovingly,

Yours.

LETTER XXII.

DEAR HEART :

We spent one afternoon and night at Lady Francis Grenville's and I must write you all about it, for indeed it was charming, and we enjoyed the meeting of a few English people so much, and found it interesting comparing their ways with ours. After all they are much the same only for the stiff conventionality that must cling to such an old-time institution as England. One fairly believes the babies are born old and are very wise. I should think the weight of centuries would be almost too much for them.

After luncheon yesterday we drove to the country home of Lady Francis not far from Warwick. Here we were most graciously received by her ladyship and a few friends. We were invited to inspect her domains and her home. Of this invitation I took decided advantage. Roaming over this old English home was to me very fascinating ; from room to room replete with memories of past times and all so furnished that they spoke of the ancestry of the owners. Beautiful old chairs, tables, beds

in chambers, one of these a haunted room of course, where we were told the ghost of some murdered baron of the feudal days roamed on the anniversary of his death. Pleasing thought, if one had to occupy the room.

One of the most delightful things to me was the picture gallery full of portraits of magnificent men and women, dauntless, daring creatures, afraid of nothing, and how one loves this spirit. Before one portrait I stood spellbound; a beautiful dark-haired woman with flashing eyes, superb neck and shoulders, diamonds encircling her throat, her head thrown up with a proud, disdainful air and yet behind it all one saw sorrow lurking. Surely this creature had not suffered pain; it ought not, could not be.

As I looked her face seemed to resemble someone I had seen and to be full of fateful reality. I turned to Sir Lionel and said, "Who does she look like?" And as I spoke Lady Francis came up smiling and said, "I am supposed to resemble her and own the compliment too great." Then, as I looked from the portrait to the woman standing 'there, I could almost swear they were the same. Did not Lady Francis have that proud toss of the head, and the sad look, was it not there too? I answered, "This lady here upon the canvas could well be

proud to own a likeness to her descendant." This pleased my lady, and she gently tapped me on the shoulder saying, "The English should be proud to own our American cousins from across the sea if all are such as you, and such pleasant flatterers. After all, do not all these little sayings ease our weary days?" With this she passed on to the next guest, always gracious, with just the right word to each one; but somehow I felt intuitively she was not happy. I looked inquiringly at Sir Lionel.

"I know your thoughts," he said; "she, one of the fairest of women, is the victim of our English traditions, unwritten laws as hard to break as those of the Medes and Persians. She was married by the order of her parents (this permitted by all the lying ways of our world) when she was barely eighteen. The money owned by my people had been squandered and we were fast degenerating into that most pitiful sight, a family once proud and able to hold its head among the august, falling into decay, scarcely able to keep up appearances. My beautiful sister was the only hope, and my parents taught her it was her duty to her family to save us by her marriage. Sir Francis, cruel, hard, dissipated, but with that ruler of all things, millions, at his back, with a large estate, offers

all to my sister with promises that he will put our family upon our feet if she would sell herself to him. Even as a boy I knew my sister worried and I often found her crying, and my mother urging her to do her so-called duty.

"Anger filled my heart, for I loved my sister truly and was proud of her as any boy might be, and one day I rushed into her room and told her unless she loved this man she must not marry him, that I would work, and care for her, and she should have the freedom she wished. I remember how she kissed me and told me that this could never be as she had given her word and could not take it back. I was almost mad with grief, and even went so far as to speak to Sir Francis and tell him I would kill him if he took my sister. At this my parents sent me away to school and on my return my sister was Lady Francis Grenville. As you may imagine her husband does not love me. As fate would have it the right man turned up too late. You know this little trick fortune has of playing, and there you see him standing by my sister. Sir Henry Seymour, such a splendid athletic looking fellow, plenty of money and all the pluck and brains one could wish for. He loves my sister, this I know, for he has told me so and frequently has ground

his teeth in rage when alone with me and says, 'To think her unhappy with that brute and I can do nothing, powerless. It makes one almost hate everybody and everything.' She loves him I feel sure, but being what she is she will bear it to the end and drink her bitter cup to the dregs. Sometimes I feel like telling them to cut it all, throw conventionalities to the wind, and off to the other side of the world to live in a blissful Eden of their own. Then sense, that common thing, comes to my rescue, and I know my beautiful sister and Sir Harry could never be happy as outcasts from the world and they would feel the stigma on their names.

"Being brought up to like the surroundings of well bred English life and all the luxury attending it, they could not be satisfied if its doors were closed upon them. No, it is better, though bad as it is, and my dear, beautiful sister's name must be kept fair. Once my sister told me there were moments when she could scarcely stand it all and she was ready to venture anything to get away from the horrors of her life. But she was always saved by the thought of those around her to whom so much sorrow would be brought."

The tears were in my eyes and I answered, "She is right." A great admiration filled me

for this beautiful creature and I loved her then and there. Then, dear, a thankfulness came over me that things were with me as they are. I have you and you me; our love is our own and though separated for awhile still we both know we possess the love of the other. I feel almost like a foolish child for kicking at the pricks in my path. Thank heaven that I am not in the place of Lady Francis. I do not know that I could stand it. A feeling that I would hate him so that a desire to almost kill him would come upon me. So you see, dear, what a dreadful creature you have in me. Oh, I love you, and that is enough for me.

Well, to continue my account of our delightful visit. Through the halls and turrets and up to the tower to see the charming quiet English view. The green fields, the cattle in the distance, the streams running through the green pastures all brought a sweet, peaceful rest to one's soul. Then downstairs through the large hall where deer heads galore stood witness to the hunting desires of the lords of the mansion. Afternoon tea with a very pleasing company of England's best society. Then dinner—and this affair was quite brilliant. All the women in low neck, of course, but, I must confess, with a scrawny set of bones. Really Lily and I felt

quite comfortable when we realized we had no such horror as bones. I had very pleasant men on each side of me who did their best to entertain me and succeeded though they interlarded their conversation with many Ohs, and Ahs. Still they were a study in human nature, and this is always interesting.

We said a sorrowful goodbye to Lady Francis this morning and here we are in London and over to Paris to-morrow.

Dear, you will be glad to hear Lily and I made a very good impression, so Sir Lionel says. Our country need not blush for us.

Sweetheart, with a heart full and brimming over with love I am always

Yours.

LETTER XXIII.

DEAREST :

Here we are in Paris. We crossed from New Haven to Dieppe and such a topsy-turvy time as we did have. I simply could not keep my feet but fortunately was able to remain on deck and by so doing proved myself a very fair sailor. Once I went below but the sights I saw there,—dilapidated looking women from whom all love of self and appearance had gone drove me forth as nothing else would. Nothing so demoralizing as *mal de mer*.

What a quaint pretty little town Dieppe is. For the first time one feels in a sense abroad. One's mother tongue left behind, and no matter how good one's French is, when one meets for the first time a native on his own soil one wonders what on earth is rushing forth from out his lips. Fairly a stream of words. In time one begins to catch and understand a little. Through the pretty French country we flew, past Amiens where I would have liked to stopped, but could not as our time was limited. When at last we reached the Gare St. Lazare, I was fairly tired to death. Bumped, bumped,

bumped—we had been for full four hours and this, to say the least, after crossing the channel is not most exhilarating. Sir Lionel and Mr. Wood are with us. Mr. Wood said Lily was not to be permitted to taste the gaieties of Paris without his presence and Sir Lionel said that knowing I would be left to look out much for myself he would come, too. So here we all are in this great and awful city. The hustle, buzz, and roar are tremendous and at first I felt as if my head were spinning.

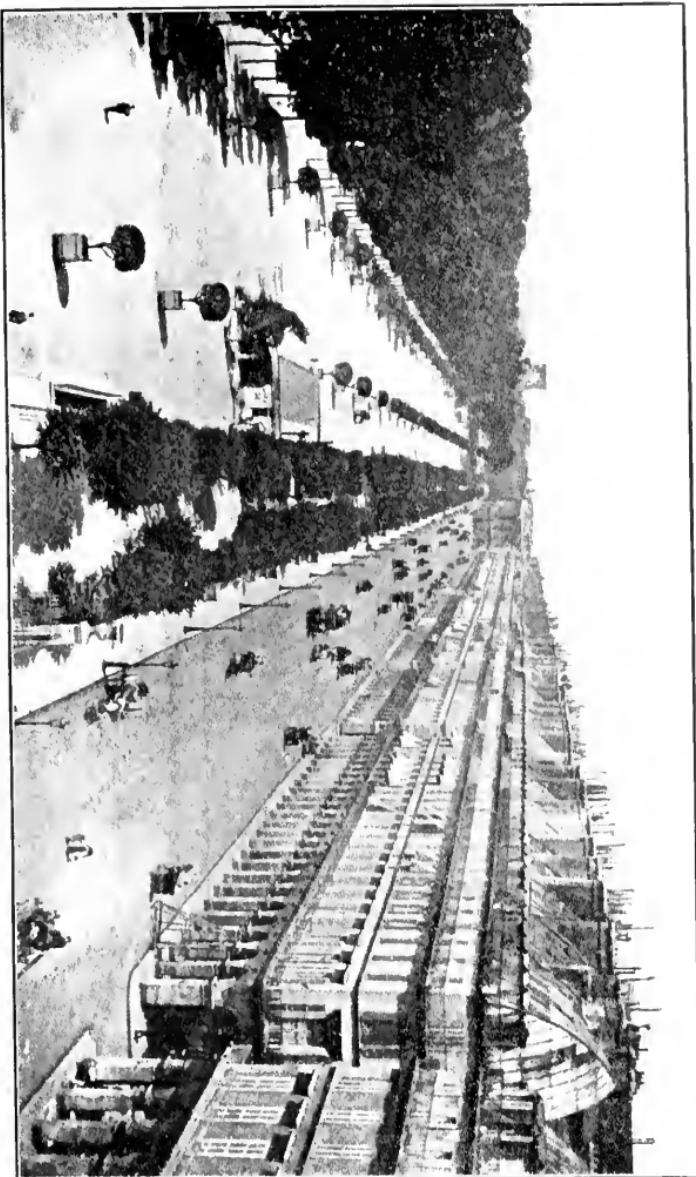
There is something very seductive in this city of Paris, the air of gaiety and lack of responsibility contagious. Lily and I came to a charming pension kept by Americans and near the Bois, on the Avenue MacMahon, from which we get a fine view of the Arc de Triomphe. The men went to the Hotel Ritz on Place Vendôme and there we are to dine to-morrow with them.

So tired were we with our trip we retired early and slept the sleep of the just. I think I did not wake up once for full nine hours. Lily says I am the most intemperate person as to sleep she ever knew, I never seem to get enough. Well, at any rate it keeps me fresh and young. This morning a charming little tray of breakfast was served in our rooms by a sweet French maiden. After this our escorts

arrived and we started on a drive, a kind of tour of inspection, to get our idea of locality straightened out. We drove down the Champs-Élysées, through Place de la Concorde, along Rue Rivoli, past the Garden of the Tuileries and from thence down into the heart of the shopping district and into that charmed street of the couturières and magasins, Rue de la Paix. Here I think Lily and I enjoyed a few hours to our hearts' content and I fear my purse was much the lighter. But, dear, I could not help it, everything one wanted not only for one's self but for one's friend and especially, dear, for you. My trunk is more than half full of things for you. You will have to send for me just out of curiosity to see what is in this mysterious trunk of mine for yourself.

I am counting off the days and each morning feel one day nearer to my love. Can it be possible that really months roll between us and our last meeting, and other months must come and go before we meet again? There are times when I feel I cannot, cannot stand it and yet I must.

In one of your letters received the other day you say you hate to think of not being with me and seeing all my pleasure and hearing all my impressions on this my first visit to Europe, that



PARIS—LES TUILLERIES ET LA RUE DE RIVOLI.

this should fall to the lot of others is almost unbearable. Beloved, remember this, you shall know all I do and think and no one can ever or shall hold the place in my heart that you do.

After our shopping we all went to Poissard's to lunch where they served us a most delicious meal much after the fashion of New York. Then a drive to the Bois, and this I found delightful, the drives through unending woods most pleasing, then the gaily dressed women most charming. We stopped at the Café d'Armenonville and here the seductive music, pretty and gaily dressed women fairly turned one's head with pleasure. One sight that amused me much was a Jap, dressed in native costume with two young Japanese girls, one on each side, dressed à la Parisienne. Turks, Hindoos, Hottentots may be seen in the Bois and on the Champs Élysées and not make the people of Paris turn their heads. A very common thing is to see a man between two women, their arms around each other driving in a fiacre, and all enjoying themselves hugely. Everybody is merry, seriousness is thrown to the winds; no matter what one is doing, no matter what class of life, all is the same. Pleasure, pleasure, pleasure. Women are quite willing to share one

man, no jealousy seems to reign. The oddest, queerest set of people I ever knew.

But still it teaches us this lesson we Americans can be too serious and that our people get very little pleasure. I think here one might shout, "Vive la gaieté!" even at the last gasp!

We returned to our pension quite tired out and glad to rest for a few hours. Then after dining quietly, drove to the Comédie Française and saw "Le Fils Natural" acted. Beautifully done and the women exquisitely gowned, but it rather bored me. The French theatre to me is too lacking in action. Our American theatre is much more interesting as well as the English. In London one can have one's fill of theatres and there I did enjoy going very much. The Comédie Française was full and near me sat a beautiful young woman dressed to perfection, but to my surprise she entered alone as did a few other young women, all dressed exquisitely. These I was told belonged to the other half of the world upon whom we would turn our backs. A sense of great pity stirred me for them but I soon realized I was wasting all my sympathy for they looked decidedly happy and utterly oblivious of us and what we thought, evidently thinking we had the worst of it.

Our escorts suggested a café after the play,

and so to the Café de la Paix we went. There we saw all the fashionable foreigners in Paris, many Americans, and some we knew. This amused us till the early hours of the morning, when we rolled home to our pension, glad to drop into bed. Before retiring, though, I re-read some of your letters, as I always do, hoping they will make my dreams all the happier and bring you to me.

With a heart full of love,
Yours forever.

LETTER XXIV.

Ah, dear, another budget of your letters made my heart ache with homesick longing for you, but, then, how at the same time they ease that heartache with the knowledge that you love me and miss me and that your heart answers every throb of mine. You say if it were not that you know and trust me, and would with your dying breath believe in me, you would feel jealous of this Sir Lionel. Dearest, this you know, no matter who is friendly to me, and I like my friends—men friends, too—for you alone my heart beats, and what is hidden there none but you can see. Then to you I owe my very self. From the day we first met somehow my being seemed to grow and the woman in me to unfold, that sympathy within me to develop without which no being can be human or touch that highest chord of all, the ability to know and understand another creature's joys and woes. To you I owe this greatest gift of all, for at your touch my soul grew, and now I know I am akin to all the world. There is no joy or sorrow that now I somehow could not understand. Dear, I

thank you for this gift from the bottom of my heart—the noblest, truest gift that man could give. How I read and love your letters; they seem to be a little of yourself and to be a promise of that meeting that I trust is not far distant. Dear, I love you; this my message, first and last.

This morning we spent at the Louvre, and, indeed, so enamored was I of the place that I intend to snatch a few hours from many days to spend there. We secured a splendid guide, who seemed to really know and love the pictures. He took us through the Chambre carrée, a museum full of quaint and beautiful things, a collection of centuries.

My breath was nearly taken away when we came upon "Winged Victory" standing at the top of a staircase, which, as one approaches it, really seems more imposing from its situation than the great "Venus" which is at the end of a long corridor. She is truly beautiful. One stood spellbound before her; and a curious thing I noticed as I looked. On one side she is grave and sad, and when one looks at her from the other she is smiling.

This gives a touch of human feeling, soul, to this marble beauty, and if from her high pedestal she could step down and speak she would

answer to our feeling and be a creature like unto ourselves. With this feeling grows a sense that she lived once long ago, and perhaps for some human sinning, that made her lovely as she is, she was destined to remain ages cold, stationed where she is but allowed to give to each one as they gaze upon her, a touch of life, that thrills and warms them to the heart, and perhaps later, at the end of all time, when her sin is expiated to the full, to return to life again. Am I foolish, dear? Yes, I know I am, but I see you smiling as you read and know you love me for this self same foolishness.

We passed into the vast rooms full of portraits and paintings and here I watched many a young artist striving to learn all he could from old-time teachers. One young girl attracted me particularly, she was very beautiful, with dark hair, and pensive dark brown eyes full of artistic longing. I stood beside her and watched her copying the well known portrait of Titian's mistress. A very fascinating and warm-looking human woman. Who could resist her? Surely no weak creature, man. I am quite glad she is dead long ago, for I fear I would be even just a little afraid to have you know her, dear.

One portrait that made a deep impression

upon me was Murillo's famous madonna. One seems to rise from earth to heaven. There in that face no passion dwelt, save that of deep motherhood, sympathizing with all the world. All was purified and every thought was saintly, far above us poor creatures here below. And yet, as I looked, her eyes seemed to be turned full upon me, and to have a sadness in them indicative of suffering for the sins of the whole world. She, a sinless woman, seemed to understand the sinner and to have the deepest pity for him. Somehow I seemed to know she knew a sinner stood there right before her needing much her prayers of intercession. Being truly human one cannot stand these states of exaltation long, and one turns to the portraits of the sinful beauties, Mary Magdalens, suffering deeply for their sins, but feeling sure that to every sufferer they would hold out a hand and if they could would sacrifice themselves to help another.

A curious feeling came upon me as I looked on the face of the madonna, and I felt she knew and understood these self-same women, and forgave.

A charming picture of Raphael hung upon the walls, a portrait by himself. David's picture of the coronation of Napoleon interested me

much. What a wonderful man ! and how one feels his inspiration all through Paris and France ! Many of Van Dyck's pictures hold one's attention, especially that of the little princes with the dog at their side. Pictures by Velasquez, the great Spanish painter, Rubens, horrible pictures to me and many others, too much for me to attempt to write you now. But, dear, just think how much I shall have to tell you when we meet. I think I shall never stop talking, but I know I shall have a tireless listener. This will be my great delight.

After our morning at the Louvre, Lily and I went to one of the Duval restaurants, being by ourselves, and feeling sure they were quite respectable, and here I think they always serve delicious little luncheons. They have a very delightful little " crème de marron " that, being fond of sweets, I enjoy. After luncheon we returned home to rest awhile, and then were joined at four o'clock by our escorts and drove out to the Bois, and this time went to the Café Cascade, and enjoyed a lazy afternoon there, afterwards dining at the hotel Ritz and going to the theatre, seeing Sarah Bernhardt in *Frou-frou*.

To me she is interesting but too intense and tiger like. I like a more human, natural woman, not one so much akin to the feline

tribe. We reach home every night tired out and I fall asleep in two minutes, and, dear, you often come to me then and we go together over these scenes.

Darling, yours as ever

LETTER XXV.

DEAREST :

To-day we gave to the Luxembourg, Notre-Dame and l'Hôtel de Cluny. How interesting the galleries at the Luxembourg, but not as much so as those at the Louvre. Still one was entranced by many of the beautiful pictures there. Among them was Cabanel's Rising of Venus, specimens of portraits by Carolus Duran, pictures of Bouguereau and Schreyer, Marie Bashkirtseff's own sketches and Corot's landscapes. One could spend many hours here, and if I can find time with our limited stay intend to do so. How I would enjoy being a student in the Latin Quarter, and having time to study art to the full and meet these Bohemian artists and see life from their standpoint. Nothing matters, all so easy, either riches or poverty. A hundred francs to-day and none to-morrow. As we drove through this quarter the other day the atmosphere of studious quiet so impressed me; broad, bright streets with bookstores and magasins of art implements, etc., and all that was necessary to a student's life, be the study what it may.

My mind had been prepared to see a dingy,

squalid neighborhood, but far from it. All the houses looked so neat and clean and the boulevards so wide. Of course once inside these houses and up the winding stairs one would find many squalid rooms and dingy attics where many a poor student lives on very meagre fare. Here one would see the pretty models, thinking no ill and indeed knowing none, living their Bohemian lives from day to day; and many, heart and soul, devoted to some artist for whom they would sacrifice their all, perhaps in the end to be lightly thrown aside broken-hearted.

One hears so much of the mysteries of their balls in this Latin Quarter, and a desire to ferret out their secrets comes over me, but to only the initiated is this allowed, and I imagine from what I hear it would be far better for a sedate matron like myself not to venture across these sacred bounds, certainly without her husband. It might be too surprising!

After our walk through the Luxembourg we spent awhile sitting in the gardens watching the students from the Latin Quarter. This was most entertaining and I gave full play to my imagination, weaving many a story around this young girl and that beautiful woman, that strange old man and interesting youth, and so

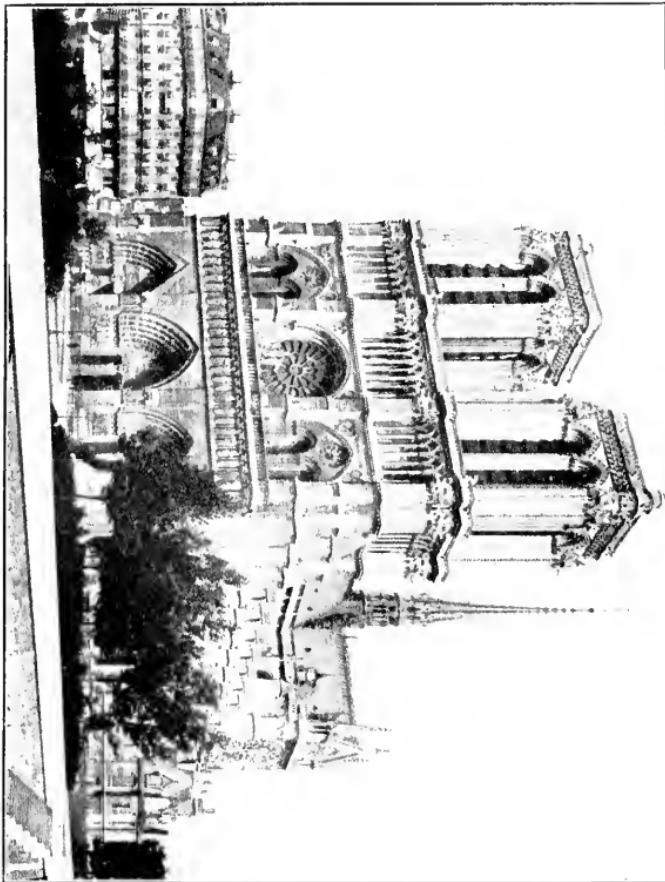
on. I think I could have sat there all day. But our time was precious and we had to hurry on to Notre-Dame. What a magnificent Gothic building this. Its impressive lines and proportions are grand and filled one with the greatest wonder that there ever lived people who could build such structures.

Surely this art is lost to-day and may we only hope that some day it returns. How beautiful the stained glass windows, arches. In some respects this cathedral was more artistically perfect than Westminister Abbey but not so full of historical memories.

One of the picturesque though grotesque features of this edifice was the gargoyle on the outside. What weird imaginations invented these? I am told that in times of war gargoyle were often used to pour hot oil upon the enemy through their horrible mouths. Oh, the cruel barbarism of the past!

From Notre-Dame we went to see the Morgue. Fortunately the men were with us or I could not have brought myself to look upon these poor, deserted, homeless creatures. At first I kept my eyes closed, but then a weird curiosity got the better of me and I opened them to see some poor distressed and lonely creature lying on the slab. Who knew them; and what their

PARIS—NOTRE DAME.



secret? Who were they? Driven to despair their last resting place here. How dreadful! And shuddering I begged the party to return to the outside life and air. Lily looked very white and was just as glad to leave behind those gruesome sights as I was.

It was some time before I could get my bright spirits back again, and so the men insisted upon our driving to a good restaurant where we enjoyed a nice lunch and bottle of wine.

Later in the afternoon we went to l'École des Beaux Arts where I was particularly impressed by the pieces of sculpture we saw. Many the first attempt of the best sculptors of the day and the copies of well-known pictures seen in other European galleries.

We ended our day by visiting the Palais de Cluny, and this old palace enchanted me. The beautiful collections of old china, most delightful. The charming rooms with old furniture of all descriptions where fascinating kings and queens of France have lived and died. How crude we seem on our side the water to have no past. How it makes one long for one.

At last Lily and I were very weary and could not look at another thing and to refresh ourselves persuaded our escorts to drive us to the

Bois where we stopped at the Café Madrid, and enjoyed the pretty women and their dressing. This latter is so delightful to watch in Paris. The women all chic and charming. Fluffy lace gowns of all descriptions. Then home to rest, and after dinner we have persuaded our escorts to take us to see some of the rather gay cafés. We have heard so much of these, such as the Moulin Rouge. I know you would not mind, mon mari, that I should have just a little glimpse of this wide world.

Dearest, all the love I have I send you and this is an unending store.

Always yours.

LETTER XXVI.

DEAR HEART :

What an amusing time we did have the other night taking a little racy tour through a few of the gayer cafés. Of course, mein liebchen, we were very careful to keep our steps away from the very dreadful ones ; the path of evil is so broad and so easily gone down, one must be very careful to eschew it. Well, dear, all my sins shall be told you and I hope and trust to receive absolution. What confessor half so good as you, my most dear and tolerant husband. Do you think that sometimes the poor little nuns so far removed from all the world and its deadly sins like to take their troubles to their confessor because he is a man ? I know, dear, that I am a heretic, but after all, these sweet-faced women, some of them quite beautiful, are still human, and might stir up some poor confessor more than he would like. Or perhaps, he might not mind so very much !

The Moulin Rouge seemed to me just an ordinary garden, a small edition of our summer ones at home, with scenic railways, slides, etc., pretty women, from the shop girls screaming

and laughing, and apparently harmlessly enjoying an outing with their beaux. Dancing reigned supreme, and occasionally from out the crowd some fair damsel would come and all alone give us quite an exhibition of her kicking. One thing struck me forcibly—so many girls together, dancing, laughing, and apparently such good friends and as glad to be together as if they had a man to dance with. American girls never look so satisfied together, but I suppose I must believe that all these French ones are so very, very bad, yet somehow, these Trilbys look so very innocent and almost make us think that we have made a mistake and are too prim. They seem to say, "We believe in making merry, trying to forget our woes and making those around us do the same, loving everyone who comes near us; are we then so very bad?"

Dear, I believe if I should stay in this awful Paris long my morals would fly to the winds. I feel sure, however, dear, these self-same little Trilbys, waking up to the fact some day, that no one really loves them, and that they are lightly thrown aside to die in a garret or find a bed in the Seine, will know that nothing in this world can be like the faithful lifelong love of man to woman, standing all tests of years and

trials, lasting through this life and on into the next. Perhaps among these women many gave their love to some cowardly, undeserving man, who threw them off lightly as he would his coat. To my mind there is no punishment bad enough for such an one, and my heart goes out in pity for his victim.

We took a look into the *Café l'Enfer*—awful place; tables fashioned like coffins, waiters dressed like undertakers, and everything used suggestive of the lower regions. It gave me such a turn I could not stay. Then we took a glimpse into “*Ciel*,” and there we felt raised above—angels everywhere and nothing of this world at all. This we found quite a blessing, but I trust we will not find heaven quite so full of tinsel!

Before driving home we took a passing look into the *Jardin de Paris*, but hearing it was very wicked I made my party hurry on. All I could see, dear, was a few girls dancing like our ballet girls at home, only not half so naughty. Well, at any rate, we had a very amusing evening, and I do not think our morals are any the worse.

On Sunday last we drove out to Versailles, and, being the first of the month, saw the fountains at play—a charming sight. Our es-

corts secured an easy carriage with two fine horses and splendid English coachman. The drive out in itself was most interesting and pretty. We went through the quaint town of St. Germain and that of Sèvres, where it is well known the beautiful china of that name is made. When we reached Versailles we secured our luncheon table first, for such a crowd as there was, of both foreigners and natives, one could not trust to luck at the last moment. After this was settled we secured a funny guide who, to our surprise, was English. He wore a bright boutonnière, and this he said he was always known by. If we ever wished to have him again or any of our friends, to ask for "L'homme avec la boutonnière." I was just as glad he was English, for the French do gabble so fast, and here I wanted to understand every word.

The fascination of this old court centre to me was so great that words cannot express it. Through those long and innumerable avenues of trees we walked and one could picture to oneself the days long since gone by when the court assembled and many beautiful women and handsome men, all gaily dressed, walked through these lanes, the love affairs and intrigues that must have been enacted here, alluring to the imagination, and one only wishes



VERSAILLES--VUE GÉNÉRALE DU CHATEAU,

those fine old days could once more be ; and from behind those trees one could be allowed to witness the scene, a silent, unseen spectator, with this one privilege—the power to read the secrets of the actors' hearts. Could anything consume one with more interest than this ? Surely France needs a court again. She loves the finery, tinsel and splendor attending it. It scarcely seems France without it.

We were taken through the magnificent apartments of the palace and I almost stood open mouthed with wonder. The proportion of the rooms superb, the carving, woodwork and decorations grand. The inlaid floor so exquisite, superb mirrors rising high above the floors with gilded frames so perfect, such beautiful furniture everywhere, and collections of most valuable curios, one of the grandest parts of these old palaces being the magnificent suites of rooms covering large areas of space, opening one into another, state rooms, reception rooms, banqueting halls, bed chambers, portrait galleries, audience halls, one after another—superb—magnificent. Where could one see such things to-day ?

Certainly many of our millionaires have their great castles, but all those seductive memories of grand lady and noble lord are wanting. No

kings or queens inhabited them long, long ago and left behind them sweet-scented odors that bring to one's mind the lives and tragedies enacted there during many centuries.

Ye millionaires of America may have your palaces, but they are lifeless things, the very soul of them is wanting—the history of living, throbbing centuries of noble men and women.

We saw Le Grand Trianon and Le Petit Trianon, also the beautiful little village where Marie Antoinette and her court played at farming. How often she must have wished it were not simply "make believe" and that she could really be the happy, thoughtless, free creature that she played to be. Poor, unhappy woman! Had she then a premonition of her fate to come?

Dear, I must not forget to tell you how one room in the palace impressed me greatly, that of all of Napoleon's portraits, sad to say, and I think France has a right to be very angry at this, England owns one of the very finest—the portrait of Napoleon on the Bellerophon.

What a wonderful creature he, to have shamelessly walked into the apartments of kings unasked, and stamped his "N" there. No wonder they tossed their aristocratic heads and would have killed this upstart. What did he

care? He wanted what they had and meant to have it.

I must not forget to mention, dear, those lovely portraits of Vigée Le Brun, which are so exquisite and hang upon these old walls and bring before one those who lived here long ago.

After luncheon we roamed out into the gardens in time to view the beautiful spectacle of the spouting fountain. Innumerable fountains everywhere and at a given signal all played at once—a most fascinating sight.

Then in the starlight we drove home and I felt we had had a very perfect day, only wanting for me that one great thing—you. Without this my days are all empty.

With great love,

Yours always.

LETTER XXVII.

DEAR HEART :

We had a most enchanting day at Fontainebleau. We took the train from Paris, hiring a carriage on our arrival at the country station and had a most delightful drive through the forests, magnificent trees and endless roads winding through them. One feels it would be so easy to lose one's way and never find the path back—and the gnomes and fairies living there seize one for their own. One curious sight was two trees, having separate trunks, grown together at the top, apparently a branch from one peeping over to and seizing the other. These trees, with true Frenchiness, were called the lovers.

One could have taken several days to this place, but not having the time we were forced to shorten our stay here to a few hours and I fear we missed much that would have been most interesting, but you and I, dear, must come here together some day in that sweet future that I long for. We were taken to see a well so deep that no one could see the bottom. We threw water down, and, after many minutes anxious waiting, heard the splash. Also we lit papers

and let them fly, whirling, whirling round till they disappeared out of sight. Gone, no one knew where. One felt a desire to follow after, to see what had become of them, but this would be a little too hazardous. Our guide asked us to allow some sisters with a few children to join our party as in this way he could economize time. Such a bright, merry set as the sisters were, having their jokes with our guide, which to say the least were quite Frenchy to our Puritanical ears.

To my imagination sisters were always grave, sedate, and scarcely dared even to speak to a man, but far from it these sisters. They even tried to get up quite a flirtation with Sir Lionel and Mr. Wood, who, nothing loth, helped them on, much to my amusement, but as for Lily—I do not think she altogether liked it. She and Mr. Wood have their ups and downs, so like children, some days hardly speak, and then make up. This I think they hugely like and are the best of friends. I let Lily talk to me all she wants to, and every night she joins me before I retire and we have a long, confidential chat, dear to all women's hearts and tell each other all our secrets except those I keep just for you, dear, and some I know Lily keeps for Mr. Wood, or will some day.

So with the sisters, guide and children, we wandered for some time, hours it seemed to me, over hill and dale and through woods. We came upon a rock from which we had a far-reaching view, and one could almost believe we could see the whole of France.

Sometimes, dear, I wish it would not always fall to my lot to wander round with Sir Lionel, but Lily and Mr. Wood fly off and of course I cannot blame them. Sir Lionel is always so the gentleman, and never says or does a thing he should not, but loving you as I do with all my heart and soul, I do not want another man to perhaps, unknowingly, take a fancy to me. It would go hard with Sir Lionel, I know, for he would suffer in silence, and no real woman wants any man to suffer for her. Sir Lionel has entered into business in New York, and I tell him, when we get back, I intend to throw him with some very pretty, fascinating woman, and he must please me by loving her and then marrying her, for being a great matchmaker, I shall not be satisfied until I see him happy with his wife. He always smiles and says he does not want a wife and is quite content as he is, only asking for my friendship and hoping one day to have yours.

Some day, I tell him, you are to know each

other. I know you would like him, and be good friends. But this, my dear heart, I have determined to do on our return, and Lily thinks it a good plan, too ; try to get him interested in some nice available woman. I have a beauty in my mind, you know her—Marion Welsh—and were once, dear, quite her captive. And then after bringing them tactfully together, without Sir Lionel knowing it, make him see less of me and much of her. Please commend your wife's well meant, kindly strategy, dear. Leave a woman to these things.

After seeing as much as possible of the forest, we dined at l'Hôtel de France et d'Angleterre, and indeed we did enjoy our meal, being ravenous as wolves, and to our tired senses the Hungarian band seemed most restful and romantic. We dined *al fresco* and this is so delightful on a balmy summer day, and this was just a perfect one, the sky deep blue, with a few snow white clouds to relieve it, and the air faintly stirring, with a soft, gentle breeze. After giving due time to the digestion of our meal, and with no undue haste, we visited the castle here.

Beautiful and full of magnificent rooms, as at Versailles, but not to my mind quite so alluring. One of the most beautiful and most perfect of the suites here was the one of Madame de

Maintenon, all the furniture gold brocade and pink roses, to one's feminine mind simply ideal. Could any woman be unhappy with such surroundings? To my mind she is a provoking character, why not either saint or sinner? There is much to be forgiven (if an honest and attractive one) to the latter, but a saint and sinner, that can never be tolerated.

One of the saddest things one saw at Fontainebleau was Napoleon Bonaparte's signature to his abdication in favor of the little king of Rome. Such a dreadful, scratchy handwriting, and one feels the man who wrote it must have felt that all was over and his star, that till now had shone bright and steady, was diminishing fast and setting never to arise again. This manuscript is kept carefully under glass; one could not help feeling very sorry for the man and pity him for his ambition shattered.

During our drives of this day we passed the château of Millet's son who has done good work as a painter, but is much overshadowed by his father's success. Lily and I are deeply interested in our work for next winter and have bought many pictures and photographs, with which to decorate our studios. How I do hope we may make some success of our undertaking. Well, at any rate it will keep us occupied, and

help to pass the days till you send for me, dear. My heart fairly leaped for joy, when in one of your last letters you said you hoped to be sent next year to the Mediterranean, where you would send immediately for me and put a stop to my wanderings without you, which you could not bear. How I love you for those words and I kissed them, love. I hate these travels without you, just as much as you do. Darling, always and forever,

Yours.

LETTER XXVIII.

DEAREST :

You tell me not to forget to buy myself some pretty gowns, that you always like to think of me as daintily and well dressed. You need have no worry on this score, and I cannot be too glad you are a man who likes to see his wife well gowned, a man who is mean in this direction is too detestable for words, is fit for "treason, stratagem and spoils." Lily and I, notwithstanding our active sight-seeing, manage to get in fittings at some of the leading modistes. Our gowns are simply perfect, and how I hope, dear, the wheel of fortune may turn so you may see me in mine. As I get fitted for these fluffy, dainty confections, and view myself in the mirror, and see a very attractive reflection, my heart sinks at the thought they may be all worn out when next I see you. Half my heart, dear, in my dressing is for you. Knowing this, *chéri*, you could not love me half so well did I not care that you should see me looking just as perfect as I could be, and that others too should know that you had a wife whose faith was this—to even gown herself more

perfectly for husband than for fiancé. Surely one can hardly blame the man for growing weary of the woman who cares no longer how her husband sees her dressed. No matter how small the pocket book, the woman who cares, and knows the value of looking her best in her husband's eyes, and wearing her best for him (not saving the prettiest gown always for company), can manage to have a becoming wardrobe. Even the simplest can be pretty and fresh. And the man who will not aid his wife to look her best for him according to his means is a "beast" and gives the best cause for divorce.

Now, my lord and master (mis-termed application), those are the heretical opinions of your docile wife. Dear, I love you, love you, love you; first, for this, whatever I say or do or think you are always there to listen, help and understand. I think there could be no union more perfect than ours. Even when I say nothing, you can almost read my thoughts and this I know, there is nothing in your heart, or in your mind I could not comprehend. That tell-tale face of yours could not keep a secret from me.

One day Lily and I gave just to driving from "couturière to couturière" along the Rue de la

Paix, and Place Vendôme, and all that neighborhood, seeing everything, and then choosing what we wanted, and indeed this was not easy, for such a mass of beautiful creations almost turned our feminine minds. Every day the leading houses have a display of these gowns between ten and twelve in the morning, and four and six in the afternoons. Really it is a fascinating show, and better than going to the theatre. Beautiful models, with perfect figures, don these superb confections one after another, and walk before one. Every woman in Paris, be of what class she may, has a fine figure, and always well gowned, never dowdily, and has that indescribable "chic" air. We simply had a delightful day, going from one place to the other and at last I settled upon a Francis gown, some beautiful ball and house gowns at Doucet and Raudnitz. Lily decided she would try Beer, Paquin, Jeanne Hallé and some others. The dressmakers in Paris number legion and many of the simple unknown ones are very good. One tires of these eternal models one sees so often copied at home, and longs to have something individual. The Parisian mind fairly bubbles and boils over with ideas, but the mind American can carry out these ideas much the better and also if given the chance can create.

This, I believe, is coming and some day New York will lead with her creations.

Frequently one sees in Paris advertisements of American goods and also English. The "straight front corset" seems to have originated in America. Whether this is to be considered hygienic or an instrument of torture seems to be hanging in the balance. What woman cares much about this if it is the fashion, the sensible one must follow it.

Dear, I have a friend whose husband is always nagging her (this art is not one that belongs only to the gentler sex) about her mode of dressing. This is unhealthy, that is extravagant, and so on, *ad infinitum*, and she, poor, foolish thing, follows his directions and turns out quite a sight. And did not I see this very wretch desert his wife in one of these most sensible of gowns and devote himself to a charming woman, gowned to perfection *à la mode*, and in all those inventions of the devil, as he terms them? Certainly the devices of his satanic majesty held this weak man captive for many an hour, and his poor wife almost in tears. She should have turned and rent him, but the poor thing quietly accepted it. I hate a man who holds his wife a domestic slave.

After our shopping, Lily and I frequently go

to Columbine's, about five in the afternoon, for chocolate and tea, and to see all the Americans in Paris, and always find some one we know with whom to have a pleasant chat. Soon our visit here will be ended, and we sail next week from Cherbourg in the *Deutschland* for home. I can scarcely believe our little trip is nearly over. I have, indeed, enjoyed it, and have much to thank my friends for in helping me pass the time when separated from you. Lily, the most perfect and unselfish of friends, has been truly lovely to me, and I can never forget her devotion.

It is very interesting watching her affair with Mr. Wood. He will have his hands full, but be the possessor of a perfect woman, with a splendid character. They do not intend to be married until the spring, so Lily and I can carry out our plans for our joint studio next winter. We have bought many things with which to artistically furnish our den, but what, with our gowns beside, we will do when we reach those dreadful custom house officials, I do not know. We hear most awful tales, and tremble in our boots.

Dearest, I wonder what you are doing, thinking, just this minute. Sometimes the desire to see you grows so very, very great I can scarcely stand this awful waiting day by day, and de-

spair almost fills me. Cruel fate, how can it treat us so? Fortunately, I have your letters, and fly to them when near distracted, and read your dear, dear words over, love, till they are well written—graven on my heart.

Dearest, my whole self is forever

Yours.

LETTER XXIX.

DARLING :

I can hardly believe to-morrow we leave Paris *en route* to Cherbourg, there to embark on our homeward journey. I hope some day to see these streets again, but trust it may be in your, my most cherished company.

Yesterday we went out to St. Denis to see the cathedral where so many of the kings and queens of France lie buried, dating back to the Carlovingian and Merovingian dynasties. If it were not for the sun and air that streams through the beautiful stained glass windows of these edifices, one would think one was buried with the musty dead and the present gone forever, swallowed up in the deep sea of the past. One is filled with strange interest and feelings, wandering from tomb to tomb, upon which lies, in carved marble, the figure of the man or woman buried underneath. How full one's brain to overflowing of imaginings concerning the lives of those who rest there, waiting for the last trump to awake them. What a strange medley of personages it would be if, upon this great day, these old kings and queens should



ABBAYE DE ST. DENIS, XII SIECLE.

arise to find many American tourists beside them ! What a strange time there would be !

We were taken through the sacristy and shown some very beautiful relics around which hung old legends and superstitions and one felt inclined to smile with a pitying mockery at the simple folks credulity. Down to the crypt we went and I nearly felt smothered ; surely we were being hurried down into the depths, far from human help, to join the hosts of the departed.

Really, dear, I do not like these places, and found myself clutching at Sir Lionel's arm. Dearest, please forgive me (Sir Lionel did) but I could not help it, a feeling of terror seized me and I was quite sure some of those marble images were moving, and beckoning for me, but I had no intention of staying with them and wished to hurry out into the light and air and to feel the living present and to know the tombs could not hold me from you yet, dear.

One of the most impressive scenes in this crypt was a circular room in the centre, with a wall around it in which were windows with gratings ; one could see inside, through these, a dim little room and could discern two rude coffins, those of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI. A fearful pity for the fate of these

two filed one. What a blessing to be born a true and independent citizen in the land of freedom, kings and queens unto ourselves. There is only one king I will ever own, and that is your own dear majesty.

We wandered through the quaint old streets of St. Denis and came upon a tumble-down restaurant where we managed to get a passable lunch at one of the outside tables. Nothing would have induced me to enter the smelly, dark dining room. Old crones, women with beards and dark-faced, villainous-looking men seemed to inhabit the interior of this eating house, and so you cannot wonder Lily and I refused to enter its portals. I am quite sure we would be dead by now, and every franc we had gone.

A pleasant and interesting day we had, and on our return to Paris dined at the Café Ambassadeurs, ending our day at the Folies Marigny, where we witnessed a very charming little vaudeville show. One thing, dear, I am afraid you will censure me for, and that is how deeply impressed I am by the spirit of Napoleon Bonaparte, still walking about these streets of Paris everywhere. The people feel him to this day. My sensations were overpowering on looking upon his tomb at l'Hôtel des Invalides. No

impression could be carried out so well as that here given. The feeling that this whole building was the tomb of Napoleon and had been built from the beginning just to hold this strange and restless spirit. As I entered the building the power and fascination of the man seemed to hold me captive—all around the tombs and names of those who loved him, warriors, generals, who followed him to death, no matter what his faults and these we know were great. The man who could so by his will hold men willing captives, must have had something great within him, and one had to render homage.

One looks down from a surrounding gallery on the great granite tomb, encircling which, upon the floor, is a large inlaid green laurel wreath, upon which were written all the names of Napoleon's great battles, and from the wreath branch out yellow rays—the sun's rays, the emblem of his greatness. One can hardly believe the great man dead; surely his spirit walks the earth yet and haunts his well-beloved France.

I must tell you of an amusing expedition Lily and I made to L'église St. Germain. It is a very pretty old-time church with memories of the ancient aristocratic times hanging round it. An old woman selling candles stood before

an altar to the Virgin and told us whosoever offered up a candle to the Virgin here would receive her dearest wish, but for it one must pray a prayer to the Virgin. Notwithstanding my being a heretical Protestant, I did this, and hope, dear, from the bottom of my heart, to receive my wish. Being told by our old woman to keep it very secret—this one of the conditions of our being granted our desires—I must leave it, dear, for you to guess. Lily said, "You really did not offer up a prayer to the Virgin?" And I answered, "Of course, I did, I wanted my wish so much, I could not afford to risk displeasing the Holy Mother." Lily was horrified, being a very good and strict Episcopalian.

We have seen many, many things so numerous, that I have not had time, dear, to write you about them, but these will all be the better for the telling.

One could not help being delighted with the stained glass windows in *Sainte-Chapelle*, said to be the most beautiful in the world. We visited *L'Académie Française*, where we saw busts of many famous writers; some of the rooms here were closed to women, and of course, I, being a very true woman, was immediately dying to see what was inside. Why are you men supposed to see everything

wicked, and we women, far more perfect creatures, nothing? I do not want or care to, only I cannot help being provoked when I am told fruit is forbidden. Then, of course, I want to eat. Why not say, "Eat all you want, even to excess," then none of us would desire even so much as a bite. Sometimes it seems strange to me Providence did not understand this in the days of the Garden of Eden.

Well, dear, dearest of all things to me, to-night we pack and to-morrow early, off to meet the steamer. Somehow I shall feel much nearer you in my own little apartment in New York. You, dear, there fill every corner.

Always with loving faithfulness yours, my husband.

LETTER XXX.

DEAREST :

We are back again in New York after a stormy passage. The custom house officials gave us very little trouble, though my heart was in my mouth. I had been told not to declare anything, for no matter what one said, the officials did not believe you, and one's trunks were gone through. Strange government that insists upon accusing everyone of falsehood. This is our great and free country.

Consequently, not being believed, everyone does do what the government wishes—tell a tarry-diddle. I was frightened almost to death when a very stately looking official asked me for my keys, which I gave, imploring him not to muss up and spoil everything. He gave me a little smiling look and said quietly, “Don’t be worried.” So I told him I put my trust in him. He laughed and in a few minutes passed me with a “nothing dutiable.” All our party got through well, and then we drove to the Waldorf for luncheon, for a last little partie carrée, thus bringing to an end our delightful trip.

How we are always in this life coming to the end of things, and with all our pleasures so much sorrow is mixed. The party promising to see much of each other this coming winter, I drove to my apartment and was glad to be alone there for awhile. My maid had had everything put to order for my arrival, and the first thing she handed me was a budget of letters from you. These were the best welcome I could have had, and with the memories of you stirring all around, I spent the best and happiest hours I have for many days since your departure. I read over and over every word of yours, and love them each and all, for do not they come right from you? I am jealous of them, for have they not been seen by you and put down by your hand? Stealing my right. You say again that you hope to so arrange that Fate will bring us together soon, that there is every chance you will be sent to the Mediterranean. Just to think to be there with you, and I have always longed to visit Italy, the land of my dreams, and now to think this may come true, crowned with the greatest joy of all—you.

Cousin Mary came in a little while ago to see me; she seems truly glad again to lay eyes on me, but much provoked at my not writing

to her oftener. I fear my pen was so full of telling you things it had no time to write to others. But I brought out a handsome piece of silk and odds and ends I had picked up for her, and told her that though I had not written much, I had not altogether forgotten her. No one loves bright things more than cousin Mary, and her face fairly beamed, and soon her grievances were forgotten and we were having a charming confab over the fire with a cup of tea. I know she would like me to ask her to come here to spend the winter and chaperone me, for she keeps constantly pointing out the dangers and difficulties besetting a "grass widow's" being alone. How careful she has to be, who she receives and what she does, etc., but I tell her I think I can take care of myself. Cousin Mary has a very charming little home of her own, and I could not stand a winter of side lectures.

Dear, I have some things for you that I will give you when we meet. One thing in particular, a miniature of myself, set in a gold heart, your initials in brilliants on the outside. It flatters me, but for this I am glad, for when we are separated I want you to imagine me more beautiful than I am. This locket you are to keep, dear, near your heart, always, always. I

have your picture, darling, in the locket you gave me, and wear it ever round my neck, but some day, beloved, I do so want your miniature, and I trust soon this will be your gift to me ; a photograph is not half so good.

To-night Lily is coming quietly to dine with me. No Mr. Wood, no Sir Lionel to be allowed. Now I must begin my little stratagem about the latter. I must not let him be with me so much and then living here alone I fear cousin Mary's admonitions should be followed. Mrs. Grundy might begin to say things and this I should hate ; first, and foremost, because I love you so. How hard it is for man and woman to be friends ! Someone always has a word to say that hurts it.

To-morrow Lily and I go to our studios and intend spending the whole day fixing them up to look most bewitching and attractive. I think this with the cups of tea brewed from the tea leaves of the gods, will bring us clients, don't you ? We are very much interested in our attempted artistic career. I trust it will not prove an utter failure. This I know, dear, whatever else my failures, my loving you can never be and with all the ups and downs of life your arms will be ever outstretched to take me in. Knowing this, I am fearless and ready for any fate.

I know this, too, my dearest, I am always ready to die, if need be, for you. There is nothing you could wish that my heart would not give. Only fretting at the boundaries human limitations place around it.

Lily and I love to don our house gowns, and such dears as we have, fresh from Paris, all lace and chiffon, and to spend a few hours together just pouring out those foolish confidences women love to hear. Lily announces her engagement in a few days and is fairly brimming over with happiness. She and Mr. Wood intend being married early in the spring and then take a trip out West. Lily says she always means to keep up her painting and that we must have our studio together. She thinks it so necessary that a woman should not let her husband think that he owns every bit of heart, and mind and soul, she has. To keep them lovers one must keep husbands at bay just a little bit.

With the love that springs from my heart eternally for you, I am and remain forever

Yours.

LETTER XXXI.

DEAREST :

To-day Lily and I have spent hauling out all our decorations from our trunks and have been backwards and forwards from our homes to our studios (two large rooms, opening into each other, with big folding doors). They were very bare looking places yesterday; but to-day, you would not know them. Late this afternoon, when I left, tired and weary with our day's work, they looked bright and charming and very fetching with draperies and pictures everywhere. Pleasant little nooks with easy cushions, easels and all the implements of our deadly art at hand. Marion Welsh came in for afternoon tea and to give us a helping hand. She has promised to sit for me immediately and says she expects to spend half her days in our entrancing quarter. Lily is to start on Mr. Wood's portrait to-morrow. He says he is going to pose looking straight into Lily's eyes and he is quite sure there will be reflected there such a handsome creature that the portrait will be stunning. Lily says if he does not behave himself she will make a very true, hideous portrait of him. Then I hear a scuffle and

demands for an apology; if a kiss is given, he will forgive and not unless. Then a refusal to give this and so on till, at last, I hear a very suspicious sound.

Do you think, dear, that our paintings will amount to much if this continues every day? I tell Lily we must come down to serious work; she says she is and has begun already.

Of course, Sir Lionel came in and I introduced him to Marion; now for my little manœuvres. You see I have Marion coming every day and it will be impossible for Sir Lionel to see me alone. Then let them be together and I intend to try and leave them often alone. Two such charming people cannot fail to like each other. Let propinquity do the rest.

I am deeply interested in my little plot. I wonder what Sir Lionel would say if he knew how deep and dark my schemes against him. Take alarm and refuse to enter into them? But, dear, this to you. I will be a wise woman and keep my plans to myself and let him think, when the happy consummation comes, he did it all himself. Do you know, sweetheart, you men, poor, deluded creatures, though you think you lead yourselves, there is always some woman who can lead you by the nose. Witness what I do with you.

We had our first afternoon tea, all of us together, a little topsy-turvy, of course, as nothing could be found. But somehow we managed to get our cups of tea and to enjoy them as never before. We hear our friends are very much interested in our doings and that it is to be quite the thing to come of an afternoon to our studio, and many intend risking having their faces put down on canvas by us. To-day we each had a surprise for the other, presents we had brought each other. I gave Lily a diamond pin for her hair and she to me a pearl pendant. Mr. Wood and Sir Lionel charmed us with beautiful etchings of different places we had visited. These we hung up all around the studio and had the greatest time hanging them where each one of us thought they ought to be. I feared we would come to blows sometimes.

Several invitations came to-day to dinners, theatre parties, receptions, balls, etc., but I do so hate to go to them without you. Balls I shall eschew ; a working woman has no time for these and I must be up betimes to properly attend to the faces of my friends. Lily says I must not give up everything, especially as I have so many pretty gowns and indeed, dear, I do feel like donning these. So I find myself

promising to go to a few dinners, operas, theatres, etc., but nothing or none of them can be you, dear. I could be satisfied in the wilds if you were only there. I might sometimes get a little longing for my French confections, and Lily says she knows I would come hurrying back wanting all the good things our big cities give. And that, though I do not think so, we would soon, if left alone, never to see her or our friends, tear each other's eyes out. She knows she would. I cannot in my wildest dreams believe it, dear. But still for us all I suppose it is best we should mix with others, too ; then we can appreciate each other so much more.

You seem to be getting worried over Sir Lionel's attentions to me—you say you know I mean nothing but what is good and right, and that you think he does, too; only this, you think he is drifting on a dangerous shore and that no one could be near me long you know and not love me. "Be careful" you say, "not to make him suffer, as he must if he once conceives a hopeless passion for you. Once fallen into this no man could extricate himself, nor would he want to. He would rather die first." You dear, dearest, of old things, you look at things concerning me from your own point, and this I feel sure of, Sir Lionel knows how to take

care of himself and is not going to be such a great goose as to fall into a pit with eyes open. Nobody wants to suffer knowingly. This from the first time he met me, he knew, that I loved my husband truly, dearly, and that it would be madness for any man to expect aught of me but friendship. If I were unhappily wedded, I do not know, dear, how strong my morals might be, needing sympathy and love so very much. How thankful one must be that temptation has not been put before one.

You are all my wants and needs and always to the end I am faithfully

Yours.

LETTER XXXII.

DEAR HEART :

I can scarcely write for the joy that fills me to overflowing at the letter received from you to-day, telling me to join you at Nice in a month. Oh, my dear, can this be true? I am almost frightened and think I must be sleeping, dreaming, and that I will soon wake to find my joy fade away into thin air. I pinch myself to make sure I am actually awake and find I really can feel, my arm is black and blue, and at last the delightful truth seizes hold of me and I can scarce contain myself for very happiness, so acute it almost gives me pain.

As it is with everything, joy and sorrow go hand in hand together. I have thought so much of this very hour that when it comes I can hardly believe my senses. But there, those dear healing happiness laden words lie written under my very eyes, "Meet me, my dearest, in a month from now in Nice;" and then you say you intend to keep me close, never letting me out of your sight again. That you cannot stand it. All these friends of mine drive you wild. This is all balm to my heart.

Don't you know, love, that I will be content just to stay beside you, feeling quite sure you will allow me to have a little walk once in awhile. How delightful, my dearest, if you and I could wander over the face of the globe, seeing all the queer and interesting things ! My taste of just a little travel has made me long for more and I can not imagine anything more perfect in this life than to wander round with you—you, with all your knowledge of the world and life, keen criticism, and love of travel, taking deep interest in learning something new, are the most delightful, soul-satisfying of companions. I am fairly crazy with delight, I am to meet you soon, to feel and know you near, and to be in that land of my dreams—fair Italy. My cup is overflowing. Your letter arrived at breakfast, and I could scarcely eat a mouthful ; that very mundane function, breakfast, was not needed by me. Had I not your summons ? Was it not more to me than meat or drink or anything else this world could give ? What became of this earth to-day ? I do not know. I simply seemed lifted up, wings had been given me to soar above, forgetful of all the petty things on this earth.

I flew to our studio, wanting to tell Lily immediately my joyful news. She was so sweet

and kind to me and entered into my joy so completely though she said with tears in her eyes, "I will miss you so." I felt ashamed of myself for having forgotten in my self-centered joy that this meant she and I must part; so I threw my arms about her and told her, no woman could have had a sweeter, better, stronger friend than she—a loyal woman to the core, and that there was no man in all the world to be more congratulated than Mr. Wood. She smiled through her tears and said, "If it were not for him, I think I could not let you go without me and I should have tagged on to you." I told her if she had been left alone she simply must have come with me. I made her talk to me about her wedding, which I told her must take place before I left.

At this moment Mr. Wood came in and I told him of my news and that I could not contentedly go without knowing Lily safe in his possession. He said that most decidedly he agreed with me and Lily must decide then and there the wedding day. He also told me that though he should miss me very much, I had done him an inestimable favor by settling my plans and departing; that by so doing I had given him the greatest gift he wanted—Lily. He promises never to forget me and to reward

me some day. So the day, two weeks off, is settled for the marriage. Lily has been very provoking about it, teasing Mr. Wood so—he could not get her to settle anything—but, quietly, after he left, she told me how very happy she was and how glad that we had made her fix the day.

Then we fell to talking about her wardrobe, and I am going with her to select everything, and I know in my present elated, joyful state of mind, I cannot fail to choose well for her, and have promised to do it if she leaves it in my hands. Poor Lily says that now she has promised to become a married woman within two weeks, she is all upset and hardly knows black from white. I will see that she is one of the most lovely of brides, and with the most perfect of outfits.

This is all to be done in two weeks; but, dear, I cannot tell you how glad I am to have my hands full, for my joy is so great at the thought of so soon joining, seeing you, actually in the flesh, I think I should jump out of my skin if it were not I shall be so busy.

And so Lily's and my studio life is to come to an end! We have enjoyed our pleasant hours together there so much; and really, dear, some of our paintings are decidedly good. Several

of our friends have turned out quite good looking under our hands, on canvas. I decided it was best to flatter everyone, be they ugly or good looking.

Marion Welsh made a beautiful study. Sir Lionel not so good ; he was so restless. I have tried so hard to bring those two together, but I fear without success ; and I had so flattered myself that I was a good matchmaker. I know they would suit each other, but both seem to have other views. Some disagreeable, good-looking young man has turned up and attached himself to Marion, and I can see how the wind blows ; they are mutually attracted and, of course, there will soon be another wedding. Sir Lionel will not take to anyone, and frequently laughs at me, and says : " My dear madam, I think you had better leave these little games alone ; they are deeper than either you or I can see ; fate alone can adjust them, and frequently even she does it very badly, being often a most cruel arbiter."

He says, often it is most hard to witness others happiness and to know oneself outside—that he had once dreamed of a happy day to come, when he would have the woman he loved beside him. She was to be the finest of all women, dearest, truest, loveliest—but now he

knew this dream of his was dead. I told him this was all nonsense ; there were many lovely women, beautiful women, in the world, and that he must find one just suited to himself. This, he says, he has seen and found, but she is not for him. He makes me very uneasy, and I shall be so glad when I hear he is married, and I do so hope it may be some time soon. I am to meet him to-night at Mrs. Van Alen's dinner, and I shall tell him then of my great joy. Somehow I feel a little worried ; I hope this is foolish. Oh, dearest, with all the joy in my heart, I love, and am until we meet and afterwards,

Yours.

LETTER XXXIII.

Oh, my darling, I have something so dreadful to tell you. I felt a little uneasy before I went to Mrs. Van Alen's dinner last night, fearing Sir Lionel might be a little upset when he heard I was so soon to leave here, and my great joy be consummated in meeting you once more.

I knew he had no right to be upset and that I had always been most careful to tell him of my love for you, and, besides, I knew him to be one of the truest of men, but, even so, dear, they sometimes fall in love when it were better not. I was taken into dinner by Mr. Van Alen, and, of course, had to talk most of the time to him, and it was not until dinner was half over that I could turn to Sir Lionel. Then I told him of your letter, and all my joyful, overflowing delight.

For a moment he grew pale to the very lips, and then said, "Believe me, I wish you all the happiness you deserve, but it is hard for your friends to see you go, especially one who has deemed it the greatest honor he has ever had to hold a place among them. Ah, you are go-

ing out of my life and I may never see you again." This I told him was foolish. I felt quite sure we would meet again, and when that happy time came I could bring you two together, and I knew you would be friends, and you would be most grateful to him for his kindness to me in your absence. He muttered something under his breath and asked me to please stop. I was getting very nervous, his face was ashy white and I noticed he was taking glass after glass of champagne.

Mr. Van Alen turned to me again and I had no other chance during the dinner to address a word to Sir Lionel. I had promised early in the evening he should take me home and now I was quite worried. What was I to do? Oh if you were only there. But I had to face this all myself; it was terrible. His poor suffering face appalled me and I realized this man loved me deeply, truly, with an abiding love. Of course he ought not, had no right, and I had given him no encouragement. Still the fact remained and he suffered. This I felt sure. He was really good and true and it was one of those sad happenings that no one could be blamed for.

I hoped that perhaps he would go home after dinner and leave me to drive to my apartment

alone. Lily was spending the night with me but she would have retired and my nervousness was growing to a high pitch as I watched Sir Lionel's white face. He was brilliant; talked as I had never heard him talk before. Still I noticed the many glasses of champagne he drank. To all appearances he was himself save for his white face and bright eyes. Dinner over, the women adjourned to the parlors, where we were soon joined by the men. Sir Lionel sang a few songs for us, which he can do so well, told some brilliant tales, and all said the evening was so unusually bright and pleasant.

The time for leaving came and Sir Lionel stepped forward and said, "Don't forget your promise to allow me to escort you." I tried to dissuade him from coming with me, but he would take no refusal, so with quaking heart I entered my coupé with him. All the drive to my apartment he was quiet, I only wished he would speak, the quiet was so ominous and I felt and knew he was wrought up to a pitch of excitement.

When we reached my door I said good night and hoped he would leave, but he pushed past me into the hall, and then into the drawing room. Then in fast words he began to talk,

telling me how he loved me. I tried to stop him, telling him he must not say these things to me; I was a married woman and loved my husband. This seemed to anger him beyond endurance, and he said, "Oh, yes, you are a perfect woman, nothing that you ever did can be brought against you, you are good and true, and love your husband, but do you know this? Your very ways, your very thoughts, and self drove me almost wild with love, using all your wiles, ways, words, smiles, unconsciously, I know. You were yourself—you could not help it, but still you used those very weapons, and now how dare you blame me? Tell your husband that I love you, love you—that what he saw in you I beheld, and hate him because he owns you. Had I come first he should be the one now suffering, for no power on earth should have held you from me. I am almost mad enough to-night to seize you, and bear you off to where no one could find you."

I felt myself trembling from head to foot; the air was heavy and I could scarcely think, but this to my mind did come—the justice of his words. I had never dreamed of doing this, but like all my sex, liked to enjoy the moment and please my friends, both men and women (the former most, I fear), and perhaps unknow-

ingly, unconsciously, had attracted Sir Lionel, and a great pity seized me for him.

At first I had felt indignant, could have torn him limb from limb. Did he not know I loved you? And how dared he say such words of love to me? But now the deepest sorrow for him filled me. What—was I to touch a man so deeply, and the pain and grief in his face rent my heart. I knew that I, though unwittingly, had made a human creature suffer, wounded him so sorely that I feared he would never recover. The scar would be there always.

At this thought I could have screamed with pain myself. The strings around my heart seemed to tighten, tighten, to almost strangle me. From a baby I have hated to give another suffering, or see another suffer pain, and here before me stood a man to whom I had given the acutest anguish. I could hardly stand, and staggered to a chair and said, "Please forgive me." At these words he seemed to soften, the tears came to his eyes, he dropped into a chair, leaned his head upon the table and burst into the deepest sobs I have ever heard, but this, thank God, I felt saved his brain. There is nothing so awful as to see a strong man cry; it is not weakness, it is the depth of misery.

My heart seemed to stand still ; I could say no more. This wreck was frightful.

Soon when his passion was spent, he gathered himself together and cried, "My God! what have I said? Believe me, I am mad to-night, and do not know what I say. You ask me to forgive you, but this I answer, there is nothing to forgive. It is all my fault. You are perfect, faultless, and your very faithfulness to your love is what I love, and I would not have you otherwise."

With this he got up and moved towards the door, saying, "God bless and keep you always," and he was gone. How long I sat there stunned I do not know. The night was stormy and the wind was gathering force, but this I noticed as I at last managed to creep up stairs, Sir Lionel had left his coat and gone out in the awful night unprotected. He had a cough, too, this I dimly remembered. At last I reached my room and fell upon my bed weeping—exhausted. But this I felt, dear—I had never meant to hurt him or to let him love me, and had simply been myself. How often, dear, you have told me this was why you loved me so ; I was just a child of nature. Beloved, I think I must unlearn this, or you must keep me safe with you. Dearest, you must never again let me leave

you. Keep me safe and tight within your arms. No one else must suffer through me. and oh, my husband, how I love you.

Until we meet again, and ever,

Yours.

LETTER XXXIV.

Oh, my dear, the past few days have been so dreadful I can scarcely write about them, but to you I must tell everything. All that is in my heart you must know. I almost feel myself one of the deepest sinners to have caused so much sorrow and suffering to a true and noble man. But, dear, I never meant it; yet how weak and shallow those words look and sound. No matter what I meant—this I did in my foolish, selfish, cruel thoughtlessness—made another suffer agony. I feel as if I could never forgive myself. Oh! my own, how I want you near me, here, just beside me to let me tell you all. Don't you know I am suffering, love; don't you know I want you? I can scarcely bear this pain and must tell you all the grief that is gnawing at my heart. I who love you deeply, deeply, let another suffer for the want of me. Where were my eyes, oh! my husband, that I did not see what was coming, what was patent to all beholders?

Dearest, in my cruel egotism, thinking only of my love for you, I was regardless of all others. My eyes were holden and I could not see. This

disaster—the punishment meted out to my self-inflicted blindness—but the deepest woe of all, that the cruel nemesis should descend on another's head. I still have you and belong to you and my cruel heart even now, bounds with joy that you still live and love me and that soon I can rest my weary, tired self in your arms and you will listen, listen to my woes and gently answer, showing me where I made mistakes and soothing all my troubles till like a tempest-tossed fluttering bird, I rest quietly in my nest —your heart.

Dearest, yet I have not told you all; the saddest and yet perhaps the best for him, is yet to come. Oh, my dear, how can I write the words I must. They look so cold and hard on paper. I want to hide my head upon your heart and there, without looking up, sob out all this dreadful tale. Then, perhaps, a little ease would come.

Two days passed after Sir Lionel left me on that fateful night, and I heard nothing. His coat remained in the hall and I hated to pass it by. It seemed an avenging dumb thing pointing to me as the author of its master's woe. Lily, sweetest, best of women, stayed with me and reasoned with me, telling me I must not take it as I did. That I was not to be blamed, I could

not help being just myself and that this I had been always and should be—true to myself and you. “This” she said, “is certain, no husband should be separated from his wife, especially such a one as you, dear, and I intend to write to Harry if he wishes to keep other men from loving you and letting your dear self fall into trouble he had better quit the navy and stay at home looking after his own. What does the navy mean? Does it wish to upset homes and bring woe to honest peoples’ hearts? They should let you go, dear, and stay where you are meant to be, just alongside of dear Harry. I dare say you will bring trouble there, too, but there is where you have got to be and must stay.” Even at the direst moment Lily sees the humorous side, but she is so kind and sweet.

As we were talking Mr. Wood came. He looked sad and stern. We both jumped up and exclaimed, “What is the matter?” He answered, “Sir Lionel is ill; very ill with pneumonia, at times he is delirious, and,” turning to me, “calls for you constantly. At times he is conscious and knows people about him. During one of these intervals he asked to speak to me and then told me if I thought you would not mind, to tell you he thought he was dying, and the greatest favor you could do him would

be to let him see you for just one moment, so that he could enter into that land beyond with the sweet remembrance that your face was the last he had seen on this shore and that you had smiled your forgiveness for his reckless words and the pain he had given you. He could not die unless you said, 'I forgive you !'"

Mr. Wood had a carriage at the door and asked Lily to come with me. Dearest, of course I went. I knew you would wish it and say it was right. But, dear, I was fairly strangled with grief, this great good man suffering so for me and asking my forgiveness when I felt I had so much to be forgiven. Fortunately we found Sir Lionel in one of his conscious moments, but very, very weak. The nurse drew me aside and said, "Madam, try to control yourself and be very gentle and quiet with my patient, give in to everything he says for his life is fast ebbing and it may be he has only minutes yet to live. For a moment I felt choked ; then a quiet came upon me and I knew I could face anything, even death ; I must not falter in this the most trying moment of all my life. I would not be the woman you or anybody could love if I could not give the comfort needed by a dying man. So with steady steps I walked over to the bedside and leaned over Sir Lionel's head.

It was terrible ; he looked so wan and marble-like, I scarcely knew his face, but as I looked, his eyes opened and a smile so beautiful and still lit up his face as he recognized me. He tried to take my hand in his feeble grasp and whispered, "Please forgive me." I could have screamed with pain at this, his deep unselfishness, forgetful of all but me even in this hour of death. I threw myself upon my knees and leaned over his proud and noble head and kissed him, saying, "Forgive ! There is nothing for me to forgive, only this : I ask your forgiveness and your parting blessing, which I shall value all my life as the greatest gift you, my truest friend, could give."

A light came over his face and with super-human strength, he seemed to raise himself and said these words : "God bless you, and keep you. I thank Him for the privilege that He vouchsafed me in letting my poor unworthy self own you for a friend, and pass a few months of this weary life near you. Give this message to your husband, tell him to keep you and love you and hold you dear, as I know he does, and that when he and I meet on that shore upon which my feet now stand, he can tell me what I would rather hear than possess all the joys of the eternal kingdom, 'I filled her life with

love and happiness.' " With these magnificent, unselfish words, he sank back upon the pillow, dead.

Dearest, how I got home, how the rest of the day was passed is all a dream to me. As I look back upon those few days after Sir Lionel's death they seem a hideous nightmare. A quiet little funeral took place at his rooms, his family sent for his remains and they have been forwarded to England. Oh, my darling, to think how near joy and sorrow meet in this world. I am going to you, the very centre of my life and being, and yet that awful sorrow stands so near me, the pain I gave another. Ah, my dearest, I must hide myself in you and you must keep me ever near you. I feel almost wicked at the joy that fills me when I know day after to-morrow I sail to join you. Oh the longed for blessed meeting. Of course Lily and Mr. Wood would not think of a large wedding after Sir Lionel's sad death, and were married yesterday quietly with just a few friends. They left in the afternoon for the West.

Lily and I could hardly speak when we said not good bye but "auf wiedersehen," and to-night I feel so very lonely without her, my dearest and best of friends. We are to write often and just as soon as we can we are all, you

and I, Lily and Mr. Wood to arrange to meet in some charming spot.

Dearest, the joy of my heart and crown of all my desires is to be granted ; I am to be with you, dear, always—always.

Yours,

LETTER XXXV.

DEAREST LILY :

To think I am really here with the joy of my life, my best, and truest, and dearest of husbands. As he clasped me to his heart I think I never saw a deeper or more thankful expression on any man's face.

"I thank God I have you at last," he said, "I never mean to let you leave me again, I cannot let you go, you must not be allowed to get into these awful troubles all by yourself. Who could help loving you? No man worth the name, but you are mine and I must protect my own. To think you are really mine, and that I hold you here, within my arms, fills me with the deepest joy, and I thank God for this —the greatest blessing a man could have, to have and hold you for his own."

Dear Lily, you can now enter into my joy and understand how happy I am beyond all words. I talk, talk, and I think I never will stop, but then you see I have the most splendid of listeners who never tires. I see his dear face smile as he listens and his arms tighten round

me and sometimes he starts and says, "Is it true, I have you once again? Thank God it is so, and this I know, you shall never, never leave my side more; you shall have the most careful of watchers now, my darling." I smile and sigh and rest content upon his shoulder, knowing as I never knew before what that peace beyond all understanding means. That perfect joy and sympathy that exists between the hearts of true lovers.

Dear, now for my little piece of joyful news. Harry, as you know, knows much about civil engineering, and the government has much need of his services in this direction, and so has asked him to resign his sea life and undertake some engineering work for them. This he has accepted and he says I can always be with him, living not far distant from his work. I may often have to rough it, but what of that. We will be together and there where he is my home is, always, and must be the sweetest and best place on earth.

Dearest Lily, your letter pleased me so, and I am more than content to know you are so happy. This I knew—you would be, for the power of loving is so great within you, and what a blessing to a man you are. No one is half good enough for you, but this I feel sure

of — Mr. Wood comes nearest my requirements for you, and he I know will make you happy and bring your life that sweetest of all joys—the love of a true man.

Dear, I am to have what I have longed for so often, a trip through Italy and the East with my husband. He is to have a few months' holiday before he begins work and we intend to enjoy ourselves to the full. What a delight it would be if you and Mr. Wood could join us. Think it over, dear, for I know we would have the most perfect of times.

Dearest, I hear my husband calling me ; we are going for a drive, so I must close, but know this always, you are my best and warmest friend and no one else can fill that spot in my heart ; and I thank you most heartily and gratefully, for all you have been, and are in my life. Give my warm love and remembrance to Mr. Wood.

As ever your sincerest friend,

GENEVIEVE.

THE END,

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